No. 16 ● APRIL 28, 1986 ISSN 0206—1473

NEW TIMES

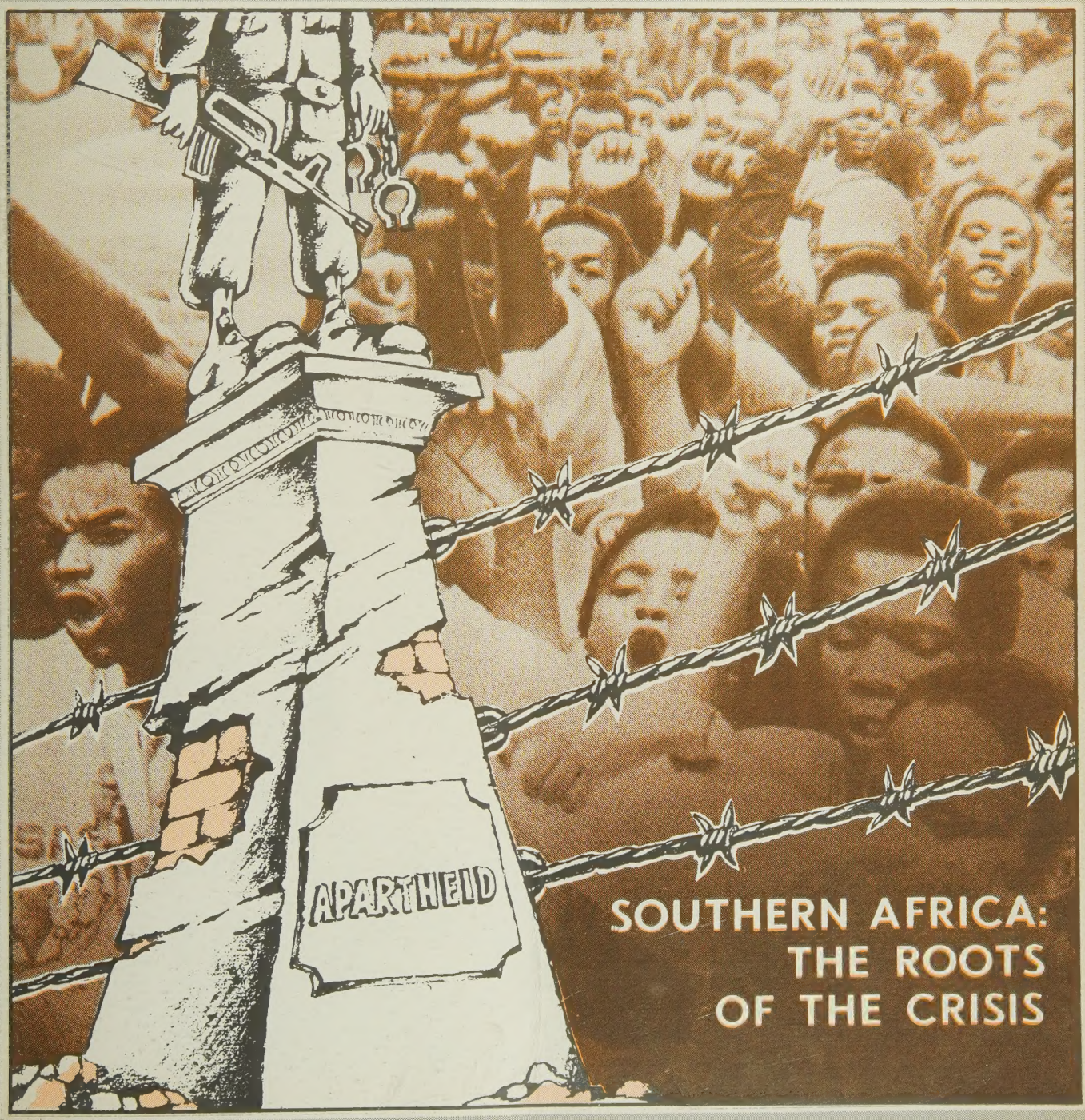
PROPERTY OF THE LIBRARY
MAY 2 1986
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEVADA TEST

RESHAPING SOVIET FARM POLICY

WHO PILLAGES MEXICO'S TREASURES



SOUTHERN AFRICA: THE ROOTS OF THE CRISIS

There are many places on the map of our country that are associated with Lenin's name. And the town of his birth on the River Volga where the young Lenin, then Volodya Ulyanov, lived has been named Ulyanovsk as a token of nationwide respect for the Russian family that brought up five revolutionaries.

In Zoya Voskresenskaya's documentary story "Encounter" there is this episode. Thinking about her children's lives, Maria Alexandrovna, Lenin's mother, asks herself what had prompted her talented sons and daughters to give up a comfortable life and promising careers to take the difficult and dangerous road of revolutionary struggle. And she answers: their honesty and integrity.

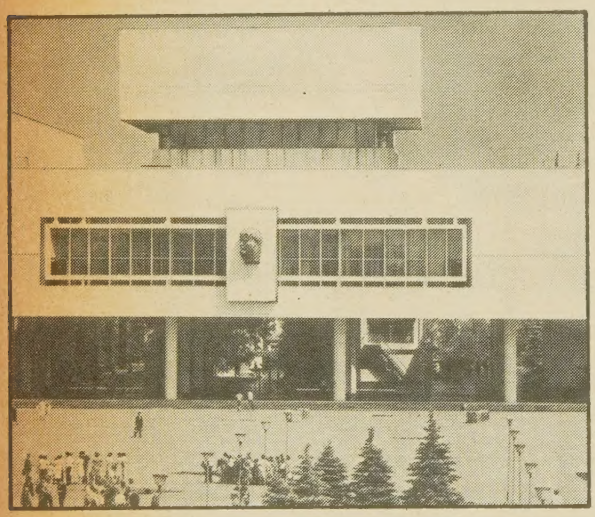
Yes, honesty was the quality most prized by the Ulyanovs. Not just simple probity. A truly honest person, in their view, was a patriot dedicated heart and soul to the people, one who reacted sensitively to any manifestation of injustice and was ready unhesitatingly to take up the cudgels on behalf of the humiliated and the insulted. The head of the family, Ilya Nikolayevich, who had devoted his life to the noble cause of popular education, was himself an example of honest, selfless service to society. The younger generation of the Ulyanovs were guided throughout their lives by the moral credo in which they had been brought up.

At crucial moments in the history of the country the Communist Party and the Soviet people, when adopting momentous decisions, invariably take counsel with Lenin. We are guided not only by the objective laws of social development he discovered, but by the lofty moral message of his teaching, by the entire biography of the leader. "I go to Lenin to purify myself, to sail on with the revolution." These lines from the verse by Vladimir Mayakovsky have a special impact today, when the whole country is intent upon giving effect to the course adopted by the 27th Congress of the Party aimed at strengthening the might of the Soviet land, and at making our life better, purer and more just.

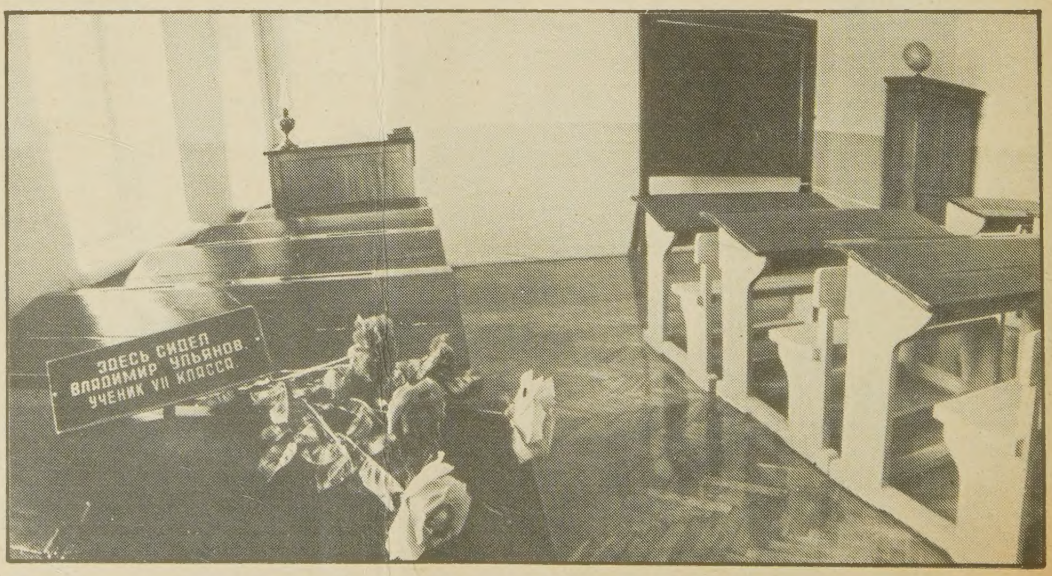
On Lenin's birthday, April 22, the memorial built in his honour in Ulyanovsk is always more than usually crowded. People come here from all corners of the Soviet land and from other countries to pay tribute to the memory of the great fighter for the liberation of humanity. Among them, too, are the younger generation, those who are destined to be the masters of the land in the 21st century.

TASS photos

Monument to Lenin.



The square in front of the Lenin Memorial in Ulyanovsk. In the inner courtyard of the memorial, built in 1970, are the houses where the Ulyanovs lived at different times.



A classroom of the former grammar school where Vladimir Ulyanov studied and which he graduated with a gold medal. There are always fresh flowers on his desk.

THE MAIN FRONT

Spring of great hope, spring of great anxiety... Will hope prevail? Will it crystallize into the joy of assured peaceful life for our people and for all other peoples? Or will anxiety develop into panic, blind paralyzing fear that robs man of the capacity to think and the ability to prevent a global catastrophe that could spell death to all?

Which way the balance will tip depends to a large extent on us, the Soviet people. That the foreign policy of a country is a direct continuation of its domestic policy is a long-established axiom. The Soviet Union has now reached a new crucial stage in its history, a stage which is to see a qualitative transformation of our socialist society—a far-reaching deep-going transformation that will extend, is indeed already extending, to all areas of the life of the Soviet people. It is a matter of powerful acceleration of economic growth and social progress, of the affirmation in everything and everywhere of the principles of genuine, inviolable social justice, of truly socialist self-government by the people. Of bold and intelligent innovation that rejects outdated stereotypes of thought and action and counterposes daring quest to archaic inertia, a dedicated sense of involvement and responsibility to stony, apolitical indifference. This is the imperative of the time. All the more so since our present plans and endeavours have a bearing not only on our own well-being.

Speaking in the young Volga city of Togliatti, CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev emphasized that "the main front where the success of the struggle for peace will be ensured lies in the further development of socialist society. What is decisive is the state of our national economy, the promotion of science and technology, the qualitative restructuring of the economy, and increase of the spiritual, intellectual and moral potential of the Soviet Union. In the final analysis, the crucial thing is how each of us works. In a word, a strong, sound economy is the guarantee of success also in the pursuance of a policy of peace. This is what is meant by the link between foreign and domestic policy." Herein lies the supreme responsibility of our society as a whole and of each Soviet man and woman to our time, to history. Awareness of this responsibility is essential also because the international situation has latterly again been aggravated to the extreme. The threat to peace presented by the irresponsible and criminal actions of the United States is real, palpable, visible. And therefore we must not lose sight of the need to strengthen the defence capability of our country as we give effect to its peaceful development plans.

Capitalism too is developing. But in developing it negates itself by engendering ever more intolerable inequality, ever new conflicts and an ever growing danger of a global holocaust. The imperialist policy of total confrontation is a reflection of its domestic doctrine of exploitation of man by man. This doctrine finds expression also in the imperial arrogance with which the imperialist powers headed by the U.S. are seeking to order the destinies of countries and peoples to further their own ends. The nuclear test in Nevada blasted a unique chance to stop the nuclear arms buildup. The barbarous aggression against sovereign Libya by President Reagan's personal order was another reminder that imperialism has learned nothing. That imperialism means war.

One of the greatest inherent advantages of socialism is that in developing it does not lose the ability to learn, to renew itself, to forge ahead to new heights. Today we have firmly assimilated many lessons of past years. We know, and will not forget, where we erred and why, in what areas we lost momentum and lagged behind. Unlike capitalism, we can stand the test of truth. Being relegated to the past are the complex of infallibility that possessed some and the groundless assumption that by giving full voice to the truth we are "supplying ammunition" to the enemy, playing into the hands of anti-Sovieteers.

Anti-Sovietism, which is as old as the Soviets themselves, is tenacious. Anti-Sovietism and anti-communism can and must be countered primarily by determined affirmation and consistent development of Leninist principles in all areas of our life. In our domestic and foreign policy. In all our efforts on the main front.

FROM OUR MAILBAG

● One cannot but admire the patience and perseverance with which Mikhail Gorbachev continues to advance flexible proposals for disarmament. Recall if only one of the most recent and far-reaching proposals, namely the proposal for the total elimination of nuclear arms by the year 2000. What could be more wonderful than to achieve this objective? I am outraged each time the U.S. government turns down another Soviet proposal. It looks as if the American government gives no thought to the tremendous responsibility it bears for the future of mankind. The men in Washington talk about the terrible arms race as if it were a matter of some cocktail party.

I am 18 years of age, a typesetter by trade. We are fighting for peace because humanity needs peace as much as a building needs a foundation. These are some of the thoughts I expressed in a letter I sent to President Reagan.

Svend PFEIFER
Erfurt, G.D.R.

● I was delighted to learn that the case against Sergei Antonov and the two other Bulgarian citizens charged with complicity in the attempt on the Pope's life had been dropped. It was a trumped-up charge based entirely on the testimony of a Turkish terrorist who proclaimed himself Jesus Christ. There was one thing about this disgraceful trial that struck me particularly: if Antonov had been really involved in the attempt, why did Bulgaria not hasten to recall its Air Company employee from Rome? After all, there was plenty of time for this—he was arrested only a year and a half after the attempted assassination on St. Peter's Square. Why did neither the Italian press nor the judges take up this point? Only one conclusion can be drawn from all that happened to Antonov: the "Bulgarian connection" is nothing but a crude fabrication concocted by overseas services and their Italian puppets with the aim of compromising Bulgaria in the eyes of Catholics and world public opinion in general.

Ladislao DI FIDIO
Bari, Italy

● I read with great interest the article "No Protectors Needed" in your issue No. 11 of this year about Germans living in the U.S.S.R. It would be a good thing for your journal to publish more articles about the different nationalities residing in the U.S.S.R. For instance, an article about Soviet Jews would surely be of interest. After all, there is plenty of material to draw on—you could talk about the part they played in the revolution, in the civil war and the Great Patriotic War, for instance, and about how resolutely they reject the claims of international Zionism.

D. GOLDIN
Elektrostal, U.S.S.R.

NEW TIMES

A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

No. 16, APRIL 28, 1986

Founded 1943

Acting Editor-in-Chief: VITALY CHERNYAVSKY

Associate Editors: L. Bezymensky, S. Golyakov, Y. Gudkov, A. Pin, B. Pishchik, V. Tsoppi, D. Volsky
Editor of English edition: **E. Smirnov**

CONTENTS

The Main Front (The Editor's Page) 1
E. Korshunov—**Barbarism by Personal Order** . . . 3
V. Ivanov—**What the Nevada Test Showed** 4
Panorama
D. Sashin—**Warsaw Treaty: Nuclear-Free Zones for Europe.** L. Mlechin—**U.S.A.: Weinberger's Five-Nation Outing.** V. Kulistikov—**Central America: Nicaragua's Good Will** 7
Statement by the Anti-Zionist Committee of Soviet Public Opinion 8
G. Ustinov—**Against Information Imperialism: The Truth Gets Through** 10
A. Arkhipov—**U.S.A.: "An America Without Unions"** . . 12
M. Baglai—**International T.U. Discussion** 14
Notes ◆ Remarks 16
Southern Africa: Ripening Grapes of Wrath
B. Asoyan—**Doctrine of Brigandage** 18
N. Reshetnyak—**Mask Discarded** 19
Y. Bochkaryov—**The Racists at a Dead End** 20
V. Bashmachnikov—**Reshaping Farm Policy** (Interviewing an Authority) 23
Georgi Atanasov (People on the World Scene) . . . 26
A. Tolpegin—**F.R.G.: Thaelmann Square in Hamburg** . . 27
A. Pin—**Pillaging the Past** (You Ask...) 29
A. Voronin—**Shah of Iran in Retrospect** (Book Review) 30
R. Mullerson—**Taking Up a Point** 31
Postscript 32

Southern Africa in flames.... Blood is being shed in Namibia, there is no peace in Angola, Mozambique and other frontline states which have been made targets of racist aggression. The grapes of wrath are ripening in South Africa itself, where the apartheid regime stays on top solely by force of arms. **(See p. 18.)**

Cover by N. Shcherbakov

Design by A. Garanin

Publisher: Trud, Moscow
Published in Russian, English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Polish and Czech
EDITORIAL OFFICE:
Pushkin Square, Moscow, GSP, 103782, U.S.S.R.
Telephones: **229-88-72, 209-07-67 (Information)**
Telex: **411164a NEWT SU, 411164b NEWT SU, 411164c NEWT SU**
Cables: **NEW TIMES PUSHKIN SQUARE MOSCOW**
Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

BARBARISM BY PERSONAL ORDER

On April 15, for the second time in just three weeks, American bombs and missiles rained down on the soil of independent Libya. On President Reagan's personal order F-111 planes took off from American bases on British territory and attacked Libya's two largest cities, Tripoli and Bengazi. The raids were made at short intervals, obviously with the barbarous intention of impeding rescue work in the densely populated districts enveloped in flames. The bombings caused heavy loss of life and appalling damage. The French embassy was hit. The residence of Muammar Al-Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, was bombed and came under missile fire.

As American pirates strafed the Libyan cities spilling innocent blood and killing and maiming old people, women and children, President Reagan announced that the attack had been made on his personal order and would be repeated as many times as Washington thought fit. It need not be said that this act of barbarism defies all the norms of international law and ordinary human morality.

The criminal attack on Libya came as the culmination to years of anti-Libyan hysteria fomented by the Washington Administration. With maniacal persistence it has obsessively threatened Libya and its leader Muammar Al-Gaddafi in a way that is reminiscent of the famous "Carthage must be destroyed" of Ancient Rome, which could not brook the existence of any Mediterranean state that opposed its will. Today, however, it is Washington, the capital of the world's leading imperialist power, which has brazenly usurped the right to mete out justice to other nations, to meddle in their affairs and dictate its will to them. The threats to Tripoli were backed up with practical preparations for an attack. Two groups of warships of the U.S. Sixth Fleet, led by the aircraft carriers America and Coral Sea, were again ordered to Libyan off-shore waters. American satellites selected targets for naval aircraft and heavy shipboard artillery.

It would seem that Washington believed intimidation alone could be enough to break Libya's resistance. The American media openly expressed "hopes" that Muammar Al-Gaddafi would be overthrown by "putschists." This suggests certain intentions on the part of the CIA. A coup would have suited Washington and its allies perfectly — they remembered too well the results of the attack on Libya by the U.S. Sixth Fleet's shipborne planes late last March. The cost of this act of piracy was a political defeat in the Middle East. It was condemned even by "moderate" Arab governments which the U.S. counts on as "friends." The United States' NATO allies were not over-enthusiastic either; earlier, in January, they had refused to join the economic blockade of Libya proclaimed with much fanfare by President Reagan himself.

But "Carthage must be destroyed"— and Washington continued to incite anti-Libyan feeling. To impress public opinion at home, the White House organized solemn ceremonies in honour of the U.S. pirates in military uniform who had taken part in the March attack on Libya and "heroically" accomplished their "combat mission." There was talk in Congress to the effect that in the event of a new attack on Libya the President would be supported by most members of the House of Representatives and the Senate. In short, ordinary Americans were conditioned to accept White House policy in a deliberately orchestrated atmosphere of chauvinism and militaristic hysteria.

Nor was public opinion in West European countries neglected. Some U.S. papers accused the governments of France and Italy of collusion with "Libyan terrorists" and alleged that some years ago they had given the "terrorists" a free hand on their territories. While the appalled West Europeans were digesting these sensational "revelations" the world witnessed a chain of tragic events, which, seen from the angle of U.S. anti-Libyan plans, were strikingly "advantageous" and "timely."

First, a bomb went off in a U.S. civil airliner on a South European route. Then, another exploded in a West Berlin discotheque. Americans were among the victims of both explosions. Acts of terrorism, as well as those who incite and perpetrate them, are certainly to be condemned in every way. Two F.R.G. organizations claimed responsibility for the discotheque outrage, and the Western media have accorded guilt for the air tragedy to a certain "Lebanese woman." Nevertheless, Washington immediately began asserting at all levels that Libya was behind the incidents and that they were a direct result of West European unwillingness to cooperate with the U.S. in combating "Libyan terrorism." Washington unceremoniously demanded that, for a start, its West European allies expel Libyan diplomats. France and the F.R.G. did expel a number of Libyan diplomats under pressure from the U.S. Almost at the same time Cairo papers carried scandalous reports that Washington was seeking to use the Egyptian army as "cannon fodder" against Libya. Cairo had reportedly rejected these American "proposals" outright. This sheds new light on the Washington conspiracy.

Reporting on the background to this conspiracy, the Washington Post quoted a Pentagon spokesman as saying: "This wasn't Grenada, though there were frequent references to it in the discussion" of the planned aggression against Libya. Indeed, the parallel suggests itself. The American invasion of Grenada was given political cover by "police forces" from a group of Caribbean island states. Having suffered a political defeat in its recent single-handed attack on Libya, Washington now tried hard to enlist its allies' support for a new anti-Libyan gamble in order to be able to share its responsibility for the attack with others. The Reagan Administration got little in return for its effort: only Britain allowed it to use its territory as a springboard for an attack on a sovereign state. No West European country permitted the Libya-bound planes, which took off from Britain, to cross its airspace, and the pirates had to detour over Gibraltar. In short, Washington found itself isolated, as had been the case in March.

Washington has again demonstrated where its obsession with world domination, neoglobalism and Big Brotherism can lead. It is playing with fire.

In its statement the Soviet government has stressed that the policy of blackmail and intimidation, which runs counter to the interests of peace and international security, should be ended once and for all.

E. KORSHUNOV

WHAT THE NEVADA TEST SHOWED

VLADIMIR IVANOV

The April 10 nuclear flash in Nevada threw light on a great many things in both American and world politics.

The contrasts it spotlighted are glaring. On the one hand, there is an indignant world that demands an end to the arms buildup and is convinced that mankind can live without hostility and bloodshed, by the laws of reason and good-neighbourship. On the other, there is the handful of nuclear maniacs bent on lording it over the universe and incapable of visualizing its existence without the lush bonanza of the arms buildup, without militarism and the drive for military superiority, without confrontation and strong-arm diplomacy.

On the one hand, the consistent peace policy of the U.S.S.R. and its socialist allies, who reject war and conflicts as means of resolving interstate disputes and ideological differences, the non-aligned and neutral countries which act on the international arena in the spirit of the principles of peaceful coexistence, and the mass anti-war movements in all countries, imperialist included—in a word, the multifaceted potential of peace, realism, common sense and political good will which, its diversity notwithstanding, is united in its striving to save our planet from catastrophe. The global danger gives rise to a global sense of responsibility for the fate of world peace and international security, an awareness of the need for untiring struggle to preserve civilization. On the other hand, there is the aggressive, militarist, expansionist policy of the United States which is keeping the whole world in a state of perpetual tension.

On the one hand, there is also a sober-minded America that wants to live at peace with the rest of the world and is aware of the dangers with which the nuclear race is fraught. On the other, the military-industrial complex and the political top crust at its service, which place the profits of the death merchants and global hegemonism above all else, ignoring the vital interests of their own people and the entire world community.

These contrasts cannot but give food for thought to every thinking person concerned about the outlook for the world. They will unquestionably help world public opinion to realize who is who in the international political arena and to draw practical conclusions from this. The nuclear flash in Nevada lit up like a bolt of lightning the dark corners of the White House backstage and shattered, or at any rate should have shattered, all illusions as regards its policy.

Moscow has given a precise definition of the challenge the U.S. Administration has hurled not only to the Soviet Union but also to all other peoples, the Americans included. The April 10 nuclear explosion, a Soviet government statement stressed, "once again showed that the U.S. Administration's verbal assurances of its resolve to do away with nuclear weapons in reality only conceal its intention to continue to threaten humanity with the nuclear sword and keep the world in the trap of fear of universal destruction."

The Soviet Union has done everything in its power to rescue the world community from this trap, to put an end to nuclear tests and thereby to embark on the road leading to the elimination of the means of mass destruction. The Nevada test releases the U.S.S.R. from its unilateral commitment to refrain from carrying out nuclear explosions of any kind, a commitment it scrupulously adhered to for more than eight months, twice prolonging the operation of its moratorium.

However, Washington is once again mistaken if it assumes that it now has a free hand to plunge headlong along the course it has chosen. Moscow cannot be knocked off balance, it cannot be diverted away from its constructive course, it will not join in aggravating the situation. It will not play into the hands of those who are anxious not to be bothered with peace proposals, not to be forced to enter into a confrontation with world and American public opinion. All they want is to be free to carry the already critical international tension to the point of no return. For only in such a climate do they feel at home, only such an atmosphere can serve them as a pretext for further escalating the arms buildup.

The hawks, however, will not have an easy time of it. The U.S.S.R. and the other socialist countries, backed by the entire world community's dedication to peace, by the mass anti-nuclear movement, will perseveringly seek to persuade the U.S. and its NATO partners to take a constructive approach to the limitation and reduction of armaments. The U.S.S.R. is prepared at any moment to return to the question of a reciprocal moratorium on nuclear explosions, provided the U.S. undertakes to refrain from such explosions.

Thus, the termination of nuclear testing depends, as before, on the United States, on whether its Administration displays a sense of realism and responsibility.

At the same time, the Soviet government again reaffirms its proposal to open negotiations without delay on the total prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. The U.S.S.R. is ready to agree to talks in any form, to any understanding that could lead to agreement.

The Soviet government has repeated its proposal to the governments of the U.S. and Britain to resume and carry to completion the trilateral talks, suspended in 1980, on the drafting of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. The Soviet Union stands for the opening without delay of multilateral talks to this end in the framework of the Geneva Disarmament Conference. It is also ready to conclude an agreement on the extension of the Moscow partial test ban treaty of 1963 to underground tests of nuclear weapons, in line with the call issued by the 40th U.N. General Assembly.

The proposal made by the CPSU General Secretary to the U.S. President that they meet at an early date in some European capital to agree on the termination of nuclear tests also remains in force.

The U.S. has done everything to assert its "right" to continue nuclear experiments unimpeded. The U.S. Administration needs these experiments, as it is frankly admitted in America, to give effect to the biggest nuclear weapons programme in 20 years. They are needed for the realization of the "star wars" strategy, to achieve a decisive military preponderance over the Soviet Union with the object of subjecting it to economic and political pressure and nuclear blackmail. For these supposed long-term advantages Washington has already paid a no small political price in terms of isolation in the world community and erosion of its reputation in the eyes of part of the American public.

Whether this damage can be compensated remains to be seen. As regards the United States' long-term imperial designs—it is out to ensure its primacy in the 21st century, while the U.S.S.R. is to be "driven into a corner"—these are futile, though dangerous fantasies. There is nothing the U.S. can do that we cannot do, Mikhail Gorbachev has said on this

score. We cannot be exhausted by means of the arms race, we cannot be brought to our knees from outer space, and we cannot be outstripped in technology. Attempts to do this will lead to nothing good.

The arrogance of power typical of the present U.S. Administration is manifest also in the matter of nuclear tests. The image of a "strong White House" acting as it pleases may impress some. But not the world as a whole. In effect, the U.S. alone rules out the possibility of ending nuclear explosions. The rationale of the self-styled leader of the "free world" is questioned in one way or another even by its closest allies. Apprehensions are voiced that the total obstructionism of the Administration is damaging to the prestige not only of the United States, but of the West as a whole. Especially in its global contest with the U.S.S.R. for people's hearts and minds. Indeed, no previous U.S. President came out on principle against general and complete prohibition of nuclear tests. The present White House incumbent alone holds that this does not accord with America's interests. The present Administration is the first in many years not to have concluded a single agreement with the U.S.S.R. in the sphere of arms limitation and reduction. And this at a time when the whole world is groaning under the burden of armaments and when the nuclear arsenals of the states are the equivalent of a million bombs of the type that destroyed Hiroshima.

It has been noted in the West, the United States included, that the President is missing the historic opportunity offered by the Soviet Union to make a promising start in the practical reduction of rivalry in the field of nuclear arms. The Soviet Union has gone more than its half of the way towards agreement with the U.S. on termination of nuclear tests, U.S. Congressman Edward Markey has said, and if the U.S. does not meet it halfway the President will go down in history as a leader that rejected a real opportunity to tame the nuclear genie. And this is not only Markey's opinion.

Washington is seeking to justify its obstructionist stand by resorting to endless reservations and objections. Above all, it questions whether there is any really reliable way of verifying the termination of nuclear explosions and whether the U.S.S.R. is ready to agree to such verification.

Today verification is no problem. There now are highly effective methods of control. It is practically impossible to conceal any nuclear explosion. Any competent expert will confirm this. The Soviet Union is ready to accept the most effective and far-reaching methods of verification. Contrary to the contentions of U.S. official quarters, it is not the Soviet position that impedes agreement. The impediment is altogether different. The real obstacle to substantial reduction of armaments, says Professor Fred Knelman, author of the book "Reagan, God and the Bomb," published recently in Ottawa, is not the technical aspects of verification but the American Administration's belief in the concept of starting a nuclear war and winning it.

Sober-minded America tried to stop the Washington nuclear maniacs. Green Peace activists entered the test zone in Nevada in the hope of being able to prevent the explosion. But their efforts were in vain.

AP-TASS photo

It is alleged that the U.S. has fallen behind the U.S.S.R. in the nuclear sphere and has to make up the lag. But how can a side be lagging that has conducted a far greater number of nuclear tests, as international statistics show? And how does this "lag" tally with the U.S. leaders' boast that America holds the lead in nuclear weapons technology and that the U.S.S.R. has to try to catch up?

Suppose that one side has in one or another respect actually gained a lead. Does this mean that it is essential to wait until absolute equivalence is reached? But even in sports it often happens that the winner of a race can be ascertained only by video tape playback. "According to Washington's logic," writes the West German Westfälische Rundschau, "nuclear explosions cannot be terminated before the nuclear programmes of both great powers coincide, and this will never happen."

It is maintained, as the White House did in reply to the Soviet Union's call to join in the moratorium, that tests are needed "to ensure the continued reliability, safety and effectiveness of our nuclear deterrent." But is it not clear that this approach rules out making nuclear weapons, as Ronald Reagan has repeatedly said, powerless and obsolete? Authoritative American scientists say that "the reliability of nuclear warhead stockpiles is confirmed almost exclusively by non-nuclear testing."

Moscow is reproached for not showing any interest in visiting the testing grounds in Nevada. Moscow is indeed not interested in registering explosions at operating proving grounds and thereby giving them, so to say, its blessing. Moscow wants the operating testing grounds closed for all time.

Moscow is also reproached for openly calling on Washington to join in its moratorium. U.S. Secretary of State George Schultz would prefer quiet, private diplomacy. The Soviet Union by no means objects to confidential exchanges, but if it is addressed publicly, as in the case of the six-nation appeal, it replies openly. And what is there to conceal when it is a matter of ending nuclear explosions? All the more so, since the Soviet Union's public appeals to the U.S. in no way exclude private talks on this question. It should also be borne in mind that "private talks" are being advocated by the very same quarters that not so long ago declared their dedication to "public diplomacy."

In a word, there are no serious counterarguments. The intention clearly is to continue the nuclear race. The New York Times comments on this score: "The Livermore and Los Alamos laboratories that design nuclear weapons have a vigorous interest in opposing a test ban; it would put them largely out of business." The military-industrial complex is afraid of being put out of business. This is the crux of the matter.

The April 10 nuclear explosion in Nevada did not shake the Soviet Union's resolve to work for the general and complete termination of nuclear tests. Moscow needs this no more than Washington does. Resumption of nuclear tests by the Soviet Union will not make the U.S. more secure, on the contrary, its security stands to suffer. Experts have already issued warnings to the White House on this score. Les Aspin, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, for instance, says that the Soviet Union could catch up with and outstrip the United States.

There was a time when the international community succeeded in concluding agreements which in one or another measure checked the arms race. But none have been concluded since the SALT-2 treaty of 1979. The process came to a halt with the entry of the present Washington Administration into office. The old barriers still impede to some extent the avalanche of armaments. But no new barriers have been raised. Yet they are needed more than ever, for material preparations for war are assuming an ever more threatening character and dimensions that leave humanity little hope for a world without wars.

The international community, it must be said, has suffered a setback in its striving to curb the nuclear danger. In these circumstances the ice impeding the efforts of the states in the matter of arms limitation and reduction could be broken by ending nuclear weapon tests. Why is this so?

First, termination of nuclear explosions could very well be resolved **independently** of other questions, as is convincingly shown by the fact that it has been possible to agree on ending such explosions in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water and limiting them underground. Moreover, this was done relatively rapidly and simply.

Second, it is obvious that prohibition of nuclear testing, limited though this measure would seem to be, is the simplest, realistic and effective **practical step** towards ending the nuclear arms race. To a considerable extent it would also be a barrier to the spread of the arms race to outer space.

The Soviet Union sees no insurmountable obstacles, political, technical or any other, to the achievement of agreement on ending testing. Agreement in this sphere is essential in order to scale down the nuclear confrontation, to overcome at long last the fossilized logic of confrontation, distrust and suspicion, the logic of not yielding on anything for fear of being left behind and looking weak in the eyes of the other side, when every action evokes an immediate counteraction, and when the taut spiral of the arms race threatens, like a gigantic octopus, to paralyze and strangle mankind in its deadly embrace.

By announcing its unilateral moratorium, the Soviet Union sets an example of political good will. Is it not entitled to a reciprocal display of good will? Moscow seeks favours from no one. It is performing its duty to its own and other peoples—the duty of a great power aware of its responsibility in the matter of resolving the problem of war and peace. Ending nuclear explosions would benefit all, both those who carry them out and those who do not. It would be the stop signal for the avalanche of armaments.

■

STOP PLAYING WITH FIRE

"We iron and steel workers of Zaporozhstal are outraged by the reckless decision of the White House to go ahead with nuclear testing in Nevada. We demand that you stop playing with fire. Signed: steelmen V. Orlov, N. Uzhva, A. Chunikhin." Calls to follow the Soviet Union's example and end nuclear testing once and for all have been made by 8,000 YCL members in Omsk, 250 high school pupils of Sol-Iletsk District in Orenburg Region, by Twice Hero of Socialist Labour grain-grower A. Gitalov, believers and priests of nine towns and districts in Moldavia. Thousands of letters and telegrams from students and school pupils, workers and peasants, clergymen, scientists and cultural workers are pouring in to the Soviet Peace Committee from all parts of the country.

The Soviet Union's self-imposed moratorium on nuclear tests has been in force for more than eight months. Responding to the appeal of the leaders of six countries not to conduct any nuclear tests until the next Soviet-American summit, Mikhail Gorbachev said: "The Soviet Union will refrain from exploding any nuclear devices even after March 31 until the first U.S. nuclear explosion." What was Washington's position? It rejected out of hand the Soviet proposal for a meeting of the leaders of the two countries without delay in order to come to an agreement on ending nuclear testing.

Just before the latest planned U.S. explosion, the Soviet public appealed to President Reagan to stop testing. "Before it is too late," the message said, "we urge you not to miss this unique chance to justify the hopes of mankind." On April 8 members of the Soviet Peace Committee handed the message to the U.S. embassy in Moscow. (Analogous messages from other Soviet public organizations were handed in later.)

The Soviet Peace Committee delegation was given a chill reception at the embassy. It was made to wait a long time without being invited to sit down while a diplomat who could take the message was found. Nor were any guarantees given that the message would reach the addressee. The delegation was merely advised to telephone.

Later the same day the secretary of the Peace Committee E. Oskolsky and your correspondent dialled the telephone number given by the embassy but received no coherent reply.

President Reagan's reply came on Thursday April 10 in the shape of a new nuclear test, a demonstrative challenge not only to the Soviet Union but to all the peoples of the world, including his own people. The White House, escalating the spiral of the nuclear arms race, is planning more explosions.

V. GALIN

U.S.S.R.—SWEDEN

CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and Ingvar Carlsson, Prime Minister of Sweden and Chairman of the Swedish Social Democratic Labour Party, met on April 15 during the Swedish leader's official visit to Moscow.

Mikhail Gorbachev dwelt on the socio-economic situation in the world and the international climate in general, and condemned in strong terms the U.S. Administration's club-law action in relation to Libya. By its armed attack on a small country it exposed the substance of its approach to cardinal international problems. This totally unjustifiable action is a link in a chain of provocative moves made by the U.S. in reply to the Soviet Union's peace initiatives and aimed at blocking the search for ways and means of improving international relations and at putting an end to the positive tendencies and hopes engendered by the Geneva meeting. These moves amount to deliberate aggravation of Soviet-American relations.

The Soviet leader commended Sweden's traditional policy of neutrality and gave a high appraisal of the activity of Olof Palme in the non-aligned movement, as head of the commission named after him and as one of the founders of the Delhi Six, which in the name of hundreds of millions of people on four continents are making an important contribution to the curbing of the arms race. Mikhail Gorbachev voiced his readiness to cooperate with the Swedish Premier to promote world and European security, including security in Northern Europe.

Both sides agreed that their meeting made for better understanding of each other's positions and views and laid a good groundwork for the further development of stable, friendly relations between the Soviet Union and Sweden, more active contacts and exchanges of views, and wider cooperation in the international arena along both governmental and party lines.

TASS photo

WARSAW TREATY

NUCLEAR-FREE ZONES FOR EUROPE

The urgent task of ridding Europe of nuclear weapons can be accomplished, the Warsaw Treaty countries hold, by giving effect to the Soviet programme for stage-by-stage establishment of a nuclear-free world, set forth in Mikhail Gorbachev's statement of January 15 this year. The total elimination by the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. of medium-range missiles in Europe could be the first step in this direction.

But there are other possibilities. For instance, nuclear-free zones could be created in Europe. This was the proposal made on April 8 by the allied socialist states to the European countries, the U.S. and Canada. The Warsaw Treaty states propose:

— to support the efforts of states favouring the establishment of such zones;

— to give effect, through negotiations, to practical steps towards creating nuclear-free zones in Northern Europe and in the Balkans;

— to begin talks on the establishment of a corridor free from tactical nuclear weapons in the centre of the continent.

In advancing this new joint initiative, the Warsaw Treaty states proceeded from the knowledge that such zones have already been set up in several parts of the world. There is a legally constituted nuclear-free zone in Latin America. Thirteen states in the South Pacific have proclaimed their region a zone free from nuclear weapons. For Europe such zones would be of particular importance since the continent is literally saturated with these terrible weapons.

This is realized also in the capitals of some countries in the Western part of the continent. The idea of nuclear-free zones is supported by parliaments, by some political parties and by broad sections of the public. The proposals for the creation of such zones in Europe are discussed at international forums. The northern part of the continent has for all practical purposes acquired nuclear-free status. Tangible prospects exist for consolidating this status, for the Soviet Union is prepared to give adequate guarantees to the countries of the zone through the conclusion of multilateral and bilateral agreements. It is also ready to take other practical steps. A dialogue on the subject has been started by the Balkan states. Speaking at a press conference in Peking, Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou said Athens had responded positively to the appeal of the Warsaw Treaty countries. (We may add that, according to the Greek leader, the People's Republic of China shares Greece's stand on the issue.)

What is needed to carry the idea into life? Political will, the joint resolve of the countries concerned. The Soviet Union, one of the authors of the proposal for nuclear-free zones in Europe, is prepared to give the necessary guarantees to such zones. The Warsaw Treaty states expect a similar attitude to the problem on the part of the U.S., France and Britain. The creation of a nuclear-free corridor in Central Europe would serve to strengthen the continent's security. It will be recalled that when Sweden advanced this initiative some time ago the Soviet Union supported it and suggested widening the projected corridor.

Of major importance for the implementation of the idea of nuclear-free zones in Europe would be the adoption by the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. of a mutual undertaking to refrain from the deployment of any nuclear weapons on the territories of countries that do not have such weapons, and the pledge not to increase or renew the nuclear stockpiles in countries where they are deployed.

The Warsaw Treaty states are convinced that it is not only imperative but possible to avert the nuclear danger. All that is needed are vigorous joint efforts of all countries—nuclear and non-nuclear, members of military-political alliances and neutral, non-aligned countries alike.

D. SASHIN

U.S.A.

WEINBERGER'S FIVE-NATION OUTING

At a press conference in Washington on the eve of Caspar Weinberger's two weeks' tour of South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Thailand and Australia, a Pentagon spokesman said the trip had not been prompted by any crisis situation and that the Defence Secretary's consultations with the allies would deal mainly with fundamental defence and security matters.

And in the various capitals visited, Weinberger did begin with global matters, having prepared for this beforehand. Just before his departure the latest issue of the magazine Foreign Affairs came out with an article by the Defence Secretary written in the spirit of Washington's present neo-globalism doctrine. Dismissing any suggestion that some areas of the world might be outside the sphere of American influence, Weinberger wrote: "We should never succumb to the temptation to define a perimeter of vital interests, as Dean Acheson did in early 1950, in effect announcing that certain areas are 'beyond our strategic perimeter.'" America's vital interests, it appears, are everywhere. It was with this theoretical postulate, and with the proclamation of the strategy of confrontation with the Soviet Union everywhere and in everything, that the Defence Secretary set out on his Asian and Pacific travels. But the tour was not undertaken for purpose of scholastic disquisitions.

The system of military treaties and pacts concluded by the U.S. during the cold-war period is falling apart. ANZUS has for all practical purposes ceased to operate, and Weinberger had to exclude New Zealand from his itinerary. Loyal allies are ceasing to toe the line, and although in Japan the U.S. Defence Secretary was heartened by the spectacle of the provocative military exercises being staged on the northern island of Hokkaido in the immediate vicinity of the Soviet frontiers, Tokyo has not yet given a definite answer to the proposal to participate in Reagan's "star wars" programme. The Japanese leaders, obliged to reckon with the powerful opposition of the broad sections of the population, are dragging their feet and confining themselves to vague statements.

As for Australia, where some important U.S. military installations are sited and on which Washington was depending for support following New Zealand's "desertion," just before Weinberger's visit, it publicly declared against participation in the "star wars" programme. Moreover, it is reported that Canberra intends shortly to revise its military doctrine—to refrain once and for all from taking part in "other peoples' wars" (an allusion to the bitter experience of the Vietnam war) and refuse the protection of the "American umbrella" inasmuch as no one is threatening it.

The Pentagon spokesman who as-

STATEMENT

BY THE ANTI-ZIONIST COMMITTEE OF SOVIET PUBLIC OPINION

The Anti-Zionist Committee of Soviet Public Opinion, meeting in Moscow on April 8, reaffirmed its determination to work tirelessly for the further advancement of national relations within the Soviet Union, and to expose more vigorously the reactionary nature of international Zionism, its ideology and political practice, aimed as they are at undermining peace and social progress. It was stressed at the meeting that with every passing year this activity on the part of the Anti-Zionist Committee receives increasing support in the Soviet Union and abroad. The Committee's ties with foreign progressive public organizations that take an anti-Zionist stand are being strengthened.

Below is the text of a statement unanimously adopted by the meeting.

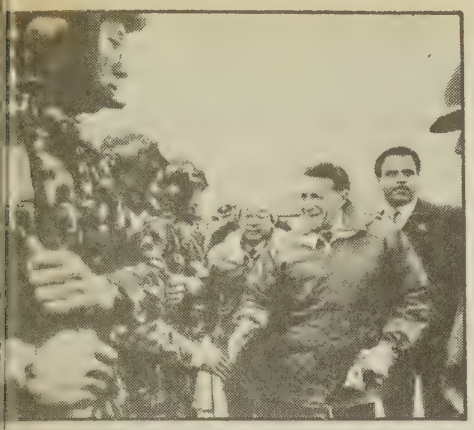
In the atmosphere of increased political activity engendered in the country by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, an historic event in the life of the Soviet people, those present at the meeting of the Anti-Zionist Committee of Soviet Public Opinion declare their wholehearted support for the decisions of the congress, which defined the main lines of the Party's economic and social policy and its foreign policy strategy.

Unswervingly following Lenin's precepts and creatively applying them in the changed conditions of today, the Communist Party attaches great importance to the advancement of relations between nationalities and is conducting an immense work of transformation. As a result of this, the inviolable friendship between peoples, and respect for the national culture and dignity of all citizens of our multinational state, have been firmly established in our country.

Implementation of Leninist policy has made for the free development of nations and nationalities, the flourishing and mutual enrichment of national cultures. Friendship between peoples has become a reality in Soviet socialist society.

To our country's foreign policy aimed at strengthening solidarity with progressive, peace-loving forces worldwide, the reactionary imperialist circles counterpose the nuclear arms race and psychological war. And in this they have the support of international Zionism. Zionists have made slanderous claims about anti-Jewish discrimination the central theme of their provocative anti-Soviet campaign. Their aim is to weaken the unity of the Soviet people and to sow distrust of the Soviet Union's peaceful policy on the international scene. The whipping up of anti-Sovietism on the pretext of "defending Soviet Jews" serves the same unpalatable objective.

But those who slander the Soviet multinational state will be unable to



Caspar Weinberger praised the Japanese army for its training standards during a visit to one of its proving grounds, and in Tokyo he insisted that Japan join in SDI and give support to the U.S. armed forces in future conflicts.

Reuters-TASS photo

sured newsmen that Weinberger would not have to settle any crisis situations during his trip was clearly stretching the point. A year or two ago perhaps a tour like the present might indeed have been just a pleasant journey to allied capitals. But times have changed.

Protest demonstrations against the Pentagon chief's visit took place in Manila, the marchers shouting "Go Home!" and carrying posters saying "Weinberger the Warmonger" and "We Don't Need American Aid." In Bangkok a time bomb exploded in a hotel where a reception for the American visitor was due to be held. Even Washington's most devoted ally, the Seoul dictator Chun Doo Hwan, is feeling less and less secure. The Japanese newspaper Nihon Keizai predicts "dramatic changes" (possibly after the Philippine pattern) in South Korea, where anti-government demonstrations are taking place and where the opposition is demanding an end to the dictatorship. What does all this spell for the United States? For one thing, the future of the important U.S. naval and air bases at Subic Bay and Clark Field is now uncertain following President Aquino's announcement that in 1991, when the agreement on the bases expires, the question will be decided by a national referendum.

And so to strengthen Chun Doo Hwan's position, the United States, Weinberger said, will give Seoul $232 million in military aid in the next financial year, 10 per cent more than last year. In return, South Korea, where some 40,000 U.S. servicemen are stationed and a thousand of nuclear warheads stockpiled, has agreed to accept binary chemical weapons as well (so far no other U.S. ally has done so). The regular large-scale American-South Korean Team Spirit exercises have been going on there for over two months now. Here, on the Pentagon's main Asian testing ground, airborne operations, invasion from the sea and a nuclear attack are being rehearsed.

The U.S. military budget provides for appropriations of $1.7 billion for increasing the strength of the special forces and equipping them with new transport facilities to speed their

refute the indisputable facts: people of over one hundred nations and nationalities live in our country as a friendly united family; there are no causes for national strife in the Soviet Union; equality and respect for the dignity of all citizens of the U.S.S.R. have been proclaimed by the Constitution and are ensured by our whole way of life.

That is why we once again emphatically declare that Soviet citizens, of whatever nationality, do not want uninvited defenders from abroad. We do not need protection from anyone or anything in our own country.

We cannot but express concern at the growth of pro-nazi, anti-Semitic tendencies in the United States, Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, and some other capitalist countries. Consistently advocating respect for the rights and dignity of every man, irrespective of his nationality or creed, the Anti-Zionist Committee resolutely declares its complete support for all progressive forces in the fight against racism, chauvinism and nationalism. In a civilized society there can be no room for anti-Semitism, Zionism, nationalism, chauvinism or racism in any form.

The past war left in its wake disunited families scattered all over the world. The Soviet government has done much for the earliest possible reuniting of such families. The questions of reuniting families, mixed marriages and other humanitarian issues are carefully considered in our country.

But we have always opposed and will continue to oppose attempts to entice Soviet citizens into emigrating to the West, unscrupulously play on ties of blood, and selfishly use the question of reuniting families to foment nationalist sentiment, regarding intrigues of this kind as an encroachment on one of the vital achievements of the October Revolution—the inviolable friendship and brotherhood of Soviet nations and nationalities.

International Zionism is becoming increasingly aggressive and militant. The adventurist expansionist policy of ruling Israeli Zionist circles can only be qualified as a policy of state terrorism.

The Middle East conflict is fraught with the threat to peace, and in this lies its chief danger. Israel and the United States are still blocking attempts to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The Anti-Zionist Committee vigorously censures Israel's aggressive policy, its outrageous acts against the Arab peoples, and the attempts of its patrons to substitute separate deals for a genuine search for peace in the Middle East.

At the instigation of ultra-reactionary imperialist circles, Zionist propaganda makes use of any means, even the foulest, to further exacerbate world tensions. The full and unreserved support of Zionist circles for Washington's strategic plans in its pursuit of a policy of terror and blackmail against sovereign states is increasing the threat of nuclear war. The unmasking of the vicious and dangerous ideology and policy of Zionism is the noble and humane duty of all peace-loving people.

The Anti-Zionist Committee expresses its solidarity and readiness to cooperate with all progressive forces fighting against reaction, nationalism, chauvinism and racism, for peace and friendship among nations. We declare our determination to help in every possible way to strengthen security and cooperation, draw peoples closer together and bring about mutual understanding in the name of peace and social progress.

deployment to any part of the world. The arms and ammunition for the forces, in the Pentagon's view, should be ready on the spot. In Bangkok Weinberger obtained Thailand's consent to create a system of such strategic stocks (in Western Europe they exist only in the F.R.G.). True, the U.S. would have wanted at the same time to restore its bases in Thailand closed down after the collapse of the U.S. intervention in Vietnam. But nothing came of this. Prapan Dhupatemiya, commander of the Thai Air Force, said: "Thailand must avoid being seen as a U.S. colony."

An indicative remark. It is evidence that the gap between the hegemonistic interests of the United States and the national interests of its allies is widening. Washington's envoys are doing their utmost to delay the process and to squeeze as much as possible out of its allies in the meantime.

L. MLECHIN

CENTRAL AMERICA

NICARAGUA'S GOOD WILL

On June 6 Nicaragua will sign an "Act of Peace and Cooperation in Central America" on condition that the United States ends its aggressive actions aimed at overthrowing the legitimate government of that country. That was the reply President Daniel Ortega gave on April 12 to the proposal for a regional treaty made by the conference of the Contadora group and the Latin American Contadora support group held in Panama early this month.

The Nicaraguan government stated that "the process of diplomatic negotiations conducted by the Contadora group is the only possible way of achieving the political understanding needed to ensure peace and cooperation in Central America." It said it was ready "to begin, in the nearest future, bilateral talks with the U.S. that could contribute to the search for peace and stability." As regards settlement of relations with Nicaragua's neighbours, Costa Rica and Honduras, the Nicaraguan government suggests that joint civil inspection committees be set up at once to investigate border incidents and that representatives of eight Latin American countries be invited to join.

The peaceable stand taken by the Sandinista leadership strikes a telling blow at the White House tactic of trying to isolate Nicaragua from its neighbours and from other Latin American states and exclude it from the Contadora process. It was under Washington pressure that amendments unacceptable from the standpoint of Nicaragua's security were introduced in the text of the Peace Act at the Panama conference. For example, Nicaragua could not agree to what would amount to disarming itself in the face of the hostile actions of the United States. Washington lost no time in presenting this as a collapse of the whole Contadora process and blaming this on the "intransigence" and "belligerence" of Managua.

It must be said that while yielding to White House pressure in the matter of altering some of the provisions of the Peace Act, the Panama conference did not approve of U.S. government aid to the contras. Similarly unsuccessful were the attempts to induce neighbouring Honduras to embark on the path of military confrontation with Nicaragua. The Honduran President José Ascona Hoyo said "Honduras does not want war with Nicaragua," adding that "the U.S. government is well aware of that position." On April 11 Honduras and Nicaragua signed an agreement on cooperation and broader trade ties.

The recently elected Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, who is anything but friendly towards the Sandinistas, condemns Washington's increased aid to the Nicaraguan rebels and suggests that the funds appropriated for the purpose be used to solve the urgent socio-economic problems of Central America.

But the White House is not accustomed to reckoning with the opinion even of its allies. Nicaragua's latest call for a peaceful settlement of the Central American crisis is most likely to remain unanswered.

V. KULISTIKOV

The "New International Information Order in the Service of Peace and Progress" was the subject of the second conference of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) held in Kabul in mid-April. It was attended by more than 50 foreign delegations and representatives of eight international organizations. The issues on the agenda included ways of combating the influence of imperialism on information in the developing countries; regional conflicts and their coverage by the mass media (with southern Africa, the Middle East and the situation around Afghanistan as cases in point); and problems relating to the training of national personnel for the mass media in newly independent countries.

Speakers at the conference and the documents it adopted firmly condemned world imperialism's efforts to monopolize information and called on the press, radio and television actively to further the cause of peace, truth and justice and promote international cooperation. They voiced their ardent support for the Afghan people's courageous struggle for the ideals of peace, democracy and social progress and demanded an end to all acts of aggression against Afghanistan and interference in the republic's internal affairs.

The AAPSO conference coincided with another important forum in Kabul at the time—a jirga of free Pushtun and Beluchi tribes residing in the frontier areas of Pakistan. Representatives from these tribes came together to discuss ways of opposing the Zia ul-Haq regime's attempts to deprive them of their traditional freedoms, rights and privileges and countering dushman bandit attacks on democratic Afghanistan. Delegates to the Afro-Asian solidarity conference sat in on a session of the jirga, met chiefs and elders of the tribes and expressed solidarity with their struggle.

Among those attending the conference were people who had already been to Afghanistan, knew the country well and were making every effort to promulgate the truth about developments there. One of them was Yuki Noguti, a young Japanese journalist. The story he told me seemed symbolic and illustrated the problems discussed at the Kabul meeting.

* * *

"I first visited Afghanistan in 1980," Yukio Noguti told me. "At the time I knew nothing about the country, my only sources of information being our papers and television which daily heaped standard bourgeois propaganda

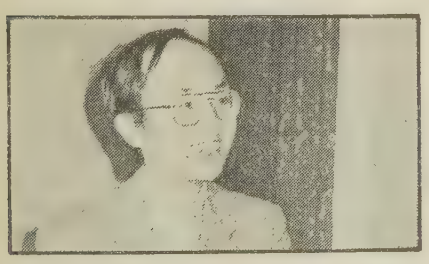
THE TRUTH GETS THROUGH

accusations on the April Revolution in Afghanistan, and on the Soviet Union.

"I stayed in Afghanistan for two weeks, saw the celebrations in Kabul on the second anniversary of the April Revolution, and made air trips to several provinces. Back home, I wrote a book about my experiences here. I must say that much of what I saw made a striking impression on me. I mean, above all, the courage and staunchness with which the republic is building a new life while fighting on dozens of fronts simultaneously.

"In the book I refuted the slanderous aspersions made against the U.S.S.R. I wrote that the arrival of Soviet troops was not aggression, but an act of fraternal international help in the Afghan people's hour of need. Without it the Afghan revolution would simply have been unable to hold out against the malicious and violent attacks on it by enemies both within and without. I compared it with Spain, where the international brigades fought just as courageously and selflessly for the republic.

"After the book came out, it attracted comment from many well-known people in Japan, some Socialists included. The idea of setting up a Japanese Society for the Study of Afghanistan emerged. The society was headed by Toshio Tanaka, a prominent figure in the Socialist Party."



Yukio Noguti, a Japanese journalist, delegate to the Kabul conference.

Photo by the author

Noguti offered me his card as deputy general secretary of this organization. In a neat hand at the bottom he had written: "Japanese-Afghan Friendship Society." I raised my eyebrows, and he explained:

"We shall be called that in May, later you'll see why....

"It happened in 1982," he went on. "Our purpose was to disseminate the truth about Afghanistan. We had 300 members at first, but the organization grew steadily, albeit slowly. On our membership dues and voluntary donations we sent two small delegations to Afghanistan every year: one in April for the anniversary of the revolution, and the other in August when Afghanistan celebrates Independence Day. Back in Japan, the delegates gave lectures, arranged photographic exhibitions, and issued pamphlets, leaflets and posters devoted to the Afghan revolution.

"Last year we decided to go over to mass actions. First, there was a fund-raising drive in aid of the anti-illiteracy campaign in Afghanistan. We called at progressive public organizations and approached ordinary people. The campaign involved a lot of explanatory work. I repeat: most Japanese have a distorted picture of what is going on in Afghanistan. We succeeded in getting our message across to three thousand people. We regard them as our activists today. We raised a million yen and spent them on 2,000 very good exercise books and 50,000 pencils like this one."

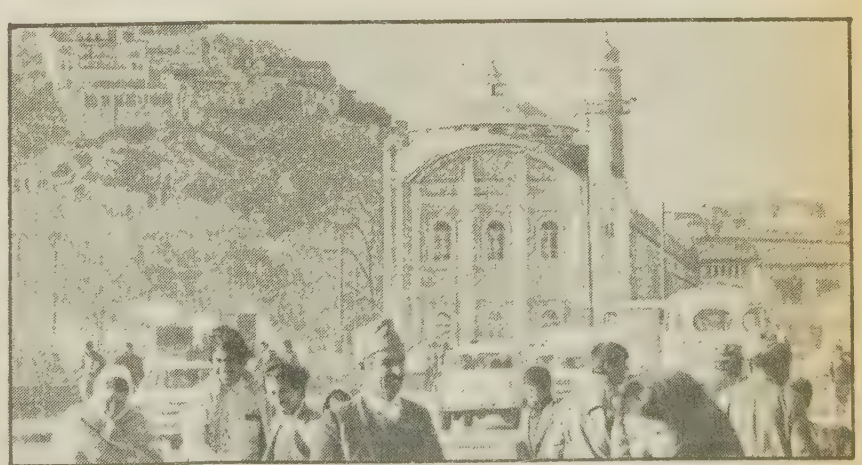
He showed me an ordinary lead pencil, on one facet of which was written in silver lettering: "Long live the friendship between the working people of Japan and Afghanistan!"

"After our parcel had gone to Afghanistan we again discussed ways of bringing the truth about Afghanistan to as many Japanese as possible. Finally we decided to make a documentary about the country, and talked well-known documentary film makers into going to Kabul. We had to raise funds again to finance their trip. This time our friends and activists sent in 1.5 million yen, just enough to meet the expedition's expenses.

"The film turned out well. It shows episodes of Afghan history, its revolutionary present and scenes from the undeclared war against the Afghan people. We offered the film to Japanese television. Hard as we tried, however, we could only get three minutes' screen time from them. This is a vivid illustration of what information imperialism is like in practice.

"We show this film regularly during the events our society sponsors, but only to small audiences. We have never managed to show it to millions.

"Interest in what's happening in Afghanistan is growing in our country, and the big-time press has had to react to it. The paper Asahi, which used to carry only biased information about Afghanistan, decided to send a correspondent. Babrak Karmal granted him an extensive



Spring has come to Kabul.

TASS photo

interview, and the paper published it in full. The correspondent also wrote a series of articles and features of a positive kind, sharing his impressions of his meeting with Babrak Karmal and explaining what the people's democratic power is actually doing. Asahi readers learned about the Jungalak Motor Repair Plant, the grain elevator, the mechanical bakery and the large polyclinic built in Kabul with Soviet assistance. The correspondent wrote about the relationship between the Moslem clergy and the state, and the Pushtu frontier tribes' struggle against the Pakistani authorities which have made their territory a springboard for acts of aggression against Afghanistan. He placed special emphasis on the broadening of the social base of the revolution. I am sure his stories came as eye-openers to most Japanese and helped them discover the true Afghanistan.

"Our society has strengthened over the four years of its existence. Many of the country's progressives have joined it. One of them is Shimura Takeshi, a member of the World Peace Council, who is now Toshio Tanaka's deputy. The society has outgrown the confines of the research organization it initially was. This is why we have recently decided to rename it the Japanese-Afghan Friendship Society. I think this is a logical decision."

Yukio Noguti was silent, and as I looked at his honest young face lit with a shy smile I couldn't help thinking that ultimately truth always prevails against any odds, that a journalist can accomplish much if he always acts in accordance with his convictions and believes in objectivity. It's wonderful that Afghanistan has friends like him!

"Judging from what you say and do," I told him in parting, "you give the society a lot of your time. Are you on its staff now?"

"Oh, no. We are all voluntary workers. I make a living by working for capitalism from time to time," he laughed. "I write articles and books to order on subjects other than Afghanistan. My comrades and I dedicate our pens and our hearts to that courageous country in publications of our own."

G. USTINOV

Kabul

U.S.A.

"AN AMERICA WITHOUT UNIONS"

or, The Bosses' Unattainable Dream

Astor Place is a district of New York which has played a special role in the history of the city's trade union movement. It was here that the first working men's associations were formed, and there is much that is reminiscent of their struggle. We met Cleveland Robinson, a veteran of the United Automobile Workers, at the headquarters of its 65th local. Having been involved in and organized workers' action for nearly 40 years, he clearly defines the stages of development of the trade union movement after the war. The 1950s and 1960s were marked by success in the workers' struggle for social change. This period was followed by an attack by the monopolies, which attempted to force on American workers a consumer society ideology and the concept of class partnership.

Today there are large numbers of firms of consultants which provide the monopolies with advice on fighting trade unions. They employ lawyers, psychologists and industrial relations experts who furnish the necessary solution. They will tell you how to prevent the organization of a union, how to get rid of one or how to foil a strike. The number of such firms now exceeds 1,000, and it is still growing rapidly. The entrepreneurs are resorting to tried and tested methods. They refuse to take on union members, pay lower wages to new employees and have recourse to arm-twisting in relations with trade unions.

Enlisting the services of experts, Big Business has also devised "humane" ways of deceiving the working people. For instance, today wide publicity is given to a new approach which supposedly provides jobs "for a lifetime." Employees are offered shares instead of wages and "equal" participation in profits. It goes without saying that to acquire these illusory benefits the worker is expected to make concrete sacrifices today "in the immediate interests of the firm."

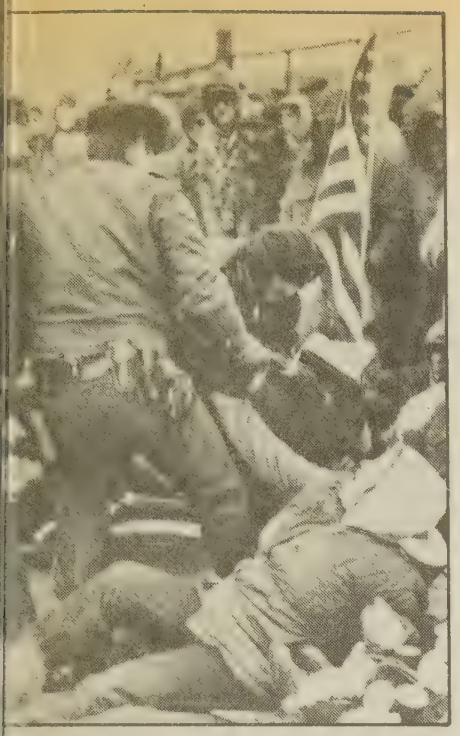
Political Affairs comments, however, that "this, as persons familiar with union developments know, is hogwash. It greatly exaggerates and turns into a 'trend' certain rare cases of concessions to workers... But this is only for a small number of high seniority, mostly older workers, and even they can be shifted to any work the company can find for them. So others are laid off in their place." As for a "fair share" of the dividends, the General Motors experiment amply illustrated the way in which profits are divided. Workers were deprived of the wage increments stipulated in the labour ageement and at the end of the year were partly compensated by "the workers' share of the company profits." General Motors did this in a record profit year.

"Getting away" from trade unions is a "new practice" much favoured by entrepreneurs. It amounts to the transfer of industries from the north and northeast of the country, where the trade union movement has traditionally been strong, to the south and the southwest, where unions are regarded with suspicion and labour is cheaper. Big Business thus stands to gain a double advantage: on the one hand, it rids itself of troublesome unions and, on the other, makes super-profits by paying much lower wages to non-unionized workers.

Reagan and Co.

However, the consultants on anti-union action with their sophisticated recommendations were forced into the background when Reagan took office. It could well have the title of an anti-labour administration, Cleveland Robinson says. Most unions are of this opinion. Though Robinson has been 40 years in the union movement, he has never seen anything more terrifying with respect to the unions, or such an overt obsession with crushing them.

American workers were shocked by the savage reprisals against the air traffic controllers in 1981. Dismissing 11,500 controllers for taking part in the strike, the Reagan Administration stripped their union of its rights. Other unions, such as the automobile, steel, rubber and mining workers' unions, have also been attacked. Using the National Guard against union action has



This is how the Hormel management settles industrial conflicts.

AP-TASS photo

become routine. Time magazine quoted a leader of the United Food Workers' as saying that workers had not been subjected to such ruthless harassment since the 1930s. AFL-CIO leaders also said, the magazine went on, that officials at the Department of Labour and the National Labour Relations Board were biassed against the unions, and that the bodies responsible for safeguarding labour and health had relaxed their control over the implementation of their own instructions.

These statements are not groundless. Far from it. Particularly if you bear in mind that, as soon as Reagan moved to the White House, he appointed John van de Water to the National Labour Relations Board. For a whole year the body which was to ensure "harmony" between labour and capital was headed by a lawyer who, as he put it, had not lost a single court case against unions. No wonder the Board has produced rulings banning the organization of new unions at factories unless it is proved that the majority of employees wish to join. Even if an entrepreneur is caught red-handed preventing his employees joining a union, the ban remains in force.

Class bias is just as evident in decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court. Here are some cases in point:

As soon as a company is declared bankrupt, it can unilaterally cancel its agreement with the unions, without awaiting official permission from the court;

a court has the right to free a firm from commitments arising from a collective agreement without demanding proof of imminent bankruptcy.

Commenting on the Supreme Court ruling, the New York Times wrote that this would be a severe blow to the unions.

Big Business is trying to take full advantage of the present Administration (while it remains in office) to realize its dream of de-unionizing America. Using reactionary legislation, Big Business tycoons are hastening to consolidate the concessions wrested from the workers during the economic crisis of 1980-82 and limit their rights as much as possible.

The Price of Concessions

In intensifying the attack on working people, the Wall Street corporations have also been taking advantage of the views prevalent among top union leaders who are prone to compromise.

Union bosses frequently make considerable concessions to business. During recent talks leaders of the United Steel Workers of America agreed to cuts in wages and in other benefits under the social security programme. They passed off this decision as a forced compromise, claiming that in the crisis the U.S. Steel Corporation was concerned for the welfare of its workers and was reluctant to resort to layoffs, but expected concessions in return for jobs. The workers did make the concessions. The results of this compromise have only recently come to light. Having made an extra $3 billion in profits by underpaying its workers over a period of three and a half years, the U.S. Steel Corporation has declared its intention to curtail production. Fifteen thousand people will lose their jobs.

The conciliatory stand of the union bosses does more than simply engender mistrust towards the AFL-CIO leaders. It is one reason why union membership has recently declined. From 1981 to 1983 alone the AFL-CIO, the country's leading union centre, lost close to a million—almost one in ten of its members. A Harris poll has shown that only eight per cent of workers questioned had any confidence in union leaders, 47 per cent trusted them only to a certain extent, whereas 38 per cent had no confidence in them at all.

Though top union leaders sometimes maintain contradictory and vacillatory positions, the resolute militancy and staunchness of the workers and their local branches have made the unions an important weapon in the fight for their rights.

At a recent conference in Chicago some 500 union activists formed a National Rank and File Against Concessions coalition. Dave Foster, spokesman for the Steel Workers of America and chairman of the conference, said it was time to abandon the practice of compromise with the capitalists when it is possible to fight them.

"If we wait to save the labour movement until Reagan is out of office it will be too late," he noted.

Business Week, the mouthpiece of U.S. business circles, quoted a public opinion poll that reflected the same militant spirit. Eighty-eight per cent of those polled (and the figure has not changed since 1975) believe that most unions in the U.S. play a positive role, because they force the government to respond to social needs. Over fifty per cent of those polled are sure that the unions protect them from exploitation by the entrepreneurs, and nearly 70 per cent maintain that, if it were not for unions, "employers would hire and fire unfairly."

The Workers Counterattack

The American working class does not intend to sit back passively and watch the attack on its rights, or wait for the outcome of talks on new collective agreements with the entrepreneurs. The strike is a traditional weapon of the working class.

Defying the guns of National Guards, arrests and threats of savage reprisals against union leaders, workers at the Phelps Dodge copper mines in Arizona have now been on strike for more than a year. The recent 15-month strike at the A.T. Massey Coal Company has ended in victory for the workers. The entrepreneurs were forced to concede that the company's subsidiaries were its branches and that, therefore, the terms of the collective agreements concluded by the workers of the head company should be applied to them. Fifteen hundred workers at the Hormel and Co. meat-packing plant in Austin, Minnesota, have been on strike since August 1985. Though the company has hired scabs who are being protected by National Guard patrols, the workers are determined to uphold their rights.

The workers are employing more effective tactics. Strikes are being staged at key plants which are vital

INTERNATIONAL T. U. DISCUSSION

MARAT BAGLAI
Prorector, Higher Trade Union College

Late in March the third trade union meeting was held in Moscow on the initiative of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions and the Higher Trade Union College. It discussed major international problems affecting the European continent. The 44 participants from 20 European countries and the U.S. included representatives of the World Federation of Trade Unions, national trade union federations and industrial trade union centres, principals of trade union schools and research establishments, and university professors. All of them—Communists, Social Democrats, Labourites, non-party people and Catholics alike—engaged in a lively exchange of views on a wide range of issues under the heading "Europe After Geneva: Possibilities for Dialogue."

The very way in which the subject of discussion was formulated reaffirmed the importance that organized labour attached to the Soviet-U.S. summit meeting in Geneva last November. Almost all influential trade union organizations approved, in one or another form, the results of the Gorbachev-Reagan talks in Geneva and expressed the desire to help realize the accords reached. Trade unionists of various political complexions supported the conclusion about the possibilities that a dialogue between the world's two biggest states, adherents to different socio-economic systems, could open. They also had high praise for the Soviet proposals submitted after the Geneva meeting, and the programme for general security produced by the 27th CPSU Congress.

The mounting threat of nuclear war, Washington's projected militarization of outer space, and further U.S. nuclear weapon tesfs were in the focus of attention at the forum. In their statements delegates reiterated the conclusion that it was the self-seeking and essentially anti-human policy pursued by the military-industrial complexes of the U.S. and its allies that posed a threat to peace. At the same time, however, some trade union leaders from West European countries avoided naming the parties responsible for the present aggravation of the world situation.

These conflicting appraisals of the current international situation were a reflection of the split in the international trade union movement, which has not yet healed. Despite this, those taking part in the Moscow meeting were virtually unanimous in demanding the immediate and complete cessation of nuclear explosions and the prevention of the militarization of outer space. This was of paramount importance. They condemned Washington's refusal to join the Soviet moratorium on nuclear weapon tests. Some spokesmen said that "further nuclear explosions in Nevada are a provocation directed at the Geneva talks, a slap in the face for all peace-lovers."

The discussion facilitated a clearer understanding of the specific features, and new forms, of the trade union campaign for peace and disarmament in different countries. The examination of the prospects of the peace movement in those capitalist countries where it is developing in the context of a political shift to the right and where the ruling circles are attacking working people's socio-economic and political rights aroused special interest. Spokesmen for Austrian, British, Danish, Spanish, Portuguese and French trade unions said that even under new, sometimes difficult, conditions workers' organizations were continuing to consolidate their ties with mass peace movements. They also pointed out that the trade unions were as militant as ever.

Statements made by trade union representatives from the socialist countries—Bulgaria, Hungary, the G.D.R., Poland, Romania, the U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia—carried considerable weight. Working people in these countries are taking part in anti-war activities such as demonstrations, marches, rallies and meetings. They support their governments' peaceful policy with their words and labour. They are in solidarity with peace fighters in capitalist countries.

Another aspect of the Moscow meeting discussions concerned the close connection between the campaign for peace and disarmament and the defence of working people's socio-economic interests in the capitalist countries.

---

to the entrepreneurs. That was what the workers at Chrysler did. They decided to take action at the plant in Twinsburg, which is the backbone of the entire production cycle. The workers got the administration to yield to their demands. While a new collective agreement is discussed, strikes are called at branch plants.

With small memberships unions cannot always resort to direct confrontation with the entrepreneurs. However, Business Week apprehensively states that even when monopolies manage to limit the number of union members the unions find effective tactics. Trying to persuade the directors of the Louisiana Pacific building materials company to discard plans for wage cuts for newly-hired workers, the carpenters' union circulated letters to major shareholders to advise them that their investment was unsound. The effect was explosive. The Chase Manhattan Bank alone sold off 1.3 million company shares. As a result, Louisiana Pacific was compelled to agree to 20 additional clauses which became part of the collective agreement.

The growing political consciousness of the American working people is a distinctive feature of the present phase in their struggle. Although the monopolies have been trying to limit all conflicts to a clash of economic interests and to conceal—with the aid of union bosses prone to compromise—the real reasons for the unprecedented deterioration in living standards, rank-and-file workers are beginning to see with increasing clarity the direct connection between the White House's policy of gaining world supremacy and the onslaught on their rights.

An aggressive foreign policy, mounting military spending and rocketing budgetary deficit are links in a single chain, to which are now being added soaring taxes, curtailment of production, elimination of jobs and the impoverishment of more and more millions of Americans.

By making demagogic promises that seemed to offer rapid solution to a number of social problems, Ronald Reagan managed to mislead his fellow-countrymen in the early 1980s. However, while the Republicans have been in office, the working people have had every opportunity to enjoy the wonders of Reaganomics. Today, even according to the conservative Heritage Foundation, which supports the White House, between 10 and 15 million Americans have not benefited from the economic recovery. Organizations which are not in duty bound to vindicate the Administration policies have quoted a different figure—30 million.

Data quoted at the meeting convincingly bore out the adverse effect the arms race is having on employment and working people's conditions. Taking into account the concrete situation that is taking shape, it was proposed that trade union research centres should conduct a joint study to establish the effect the U.S. "star wars" programme would have on the working and living conditions of factory and office employees.

Many speakers drew attention to the fact that the working people had not rid themselves of deeply rooted fears (frequently intensified by the militarists and their propaganda machines) of an "inevitable" increase in unemployment in the event of the conversion of munitions industries to peaceful production. In this connection it was pointed out that the expansion of economic co-operation between capitalist and socialist states could effectively help resolve crucial social problems in the former in the interests of the working people, and above all help increase employment.

During the meeting.

Photo by N. Privalov

The discussions attached special importance to the unity in trade union ranks. Speakers from Austria, Britain, Finland, France and other countries pointed to the urgent need for joint action by all sections of the working-class movement at national and continental levels. They maintained that the fight for peace was also a reliable platform for the defence of working people's interests in all spheres of socio-economic and political life.

It should not be overlooked, of course, that discussions of questions relating to war and peace frequently escalate into ideological arguments fraught with the danger of a deadlock that could complicate united action. For this reason, many speakers pointed out, criticism of political systems or the philosophical concepts and traditions of trade union movements in one or other country was to be avoided. In the face of the threat to the very existence of humanity it was particularly important to exhibit a sense of reality and a sincere desire to understand the other side. Sound reason, hatred of predatory wars and love of people did indeed form a common platform for a fruitful exchange of views, if, of course, the parties involved genuinely regarded peace as their supreme ethical and political objective.

The elements that should make up a European trade union dialogue are clear for all to see. The main purpose of such a dialogue is to find ways specific to the trade unions to promote the Helsinki process. Working people the world over are deeply concerned about such issues as how to restore, deepen and strengthen détente and use it to ensure the well-being of millions of workers.

Such a dialogue, however, is virtually nonexistent, speakers at the meeting pointed out. This situation is not in keeping with the spirit and requirements of our time. It prevents the European trade union movement from playing a more important role in the solution of problems on which the present and future of the continent depends.

At the forum it was repeatedly stated that at the present, crucial juncture, when the future of mankind is being decided, not only politicians, but also trade unionists, should be capable of new thinking and a new approach to vital problems. Overcoming hostility and bias between the largest of the working people's mass organizations was an essential precondition for co-ordinated action, European détente and closer all-round, mutually advantageous cooperation at continental level.

In the unanimous opinion of those taking part, the meeting has been a useful one. It has shown that a wide-ranging, free and open dialogue helps enhance the role of the trade unions and their research establishments in the creation of a new political climate in Europe, a climate more favourable to the vital interests of the working people.

■

All these factors have affected the current stage of the working people's struggle for their rights in the U.S. In an interview he granted your correspondent, Gus Hall, General Secretary of the U.S. Communist Party, said:

"Trade union activities are characterized by a new climate which is distinguished by its mounting anti-imperialist, anti-monopolist trend and a lower level of anti-communist rhetoric on the part of the top leaders. These new trends are an answer to five years of Reaganomics, the Administration's neo-conservative course, the structural crisis of the U.S. economy, and the concessions the labour union bosses have made during this period."

Even the traditionally anti-communist AFL-CIO leaders find it increasingly difficult to ignore the sentiments of the union masses who are opposing the arms race, realize the impossibility of concessions from business under the present "millionaires' club" Administration and are taking vigorous action. Several union leaders have been forced to declare their resolve to uphold workers' interests in talks with entrepreneurs by relying on mass action on a wider scale.

At its annual winter meeting in February the AFL-CIO executive passed resolutions demanding that Congress eliminate tax loopholes and privileges for corporations and reject increases in military spending at the expense of domestic welfare programmes.

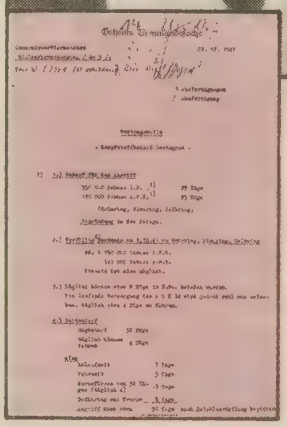
Close to 30 prominent union leaders signed a petition urging Congress to vote against appropriations for the contras. In March the union centre held a Day of Solidarity with the Victims of Apartheid. Although the official stand of the AFL-CIO leadership is changing slowly and with difficulty, branches which represent more than half the members of the centre have expressed themselves in favour of a nuclear arms freeze and an agreement with the Soviet Union on curbing the arms race. More and more unions affiliated to AFL-CIO understand that unemployment, hunger, the decline of urban centres and closure of industries are a direct result of the growth of the military budget, which also covers the "star wars" programme. This is a clear manifestation of class consciousness in the nuclear age, an indication of the inner strength of the American workers' movement and of their determination to step up the fight for peace and for the right of all Americans to a decent life.

A. ARKHIPOV
Our Own Correspondent

New York

Fuehrer, FOFA and CW

On April 1, 1943, a plan for a chemical assault on besieged Leningrad with such poisons as Tabun, Sarin and mustard gas was to be put into effect by nazi troops. It was calculated that 720,000 chemical shells would be needed for the first strike and twice as many for the second to "crush troop and civilian resistance." Hitler ordered the monthly manufacture of poison gases to be boosted to 7,000 tons. In short, everything was ready to implement this monstrous project. What frustrated it was the firm stand taken by the allies in the anti-Hitler coalition. Britain, in particular, announced that it would view a chemical strike at the U.S.S.R. as a strike against itself and would retaliate in kind against nazi Germany.



The secret plan for a chemical strike at Leningrad; the Bundeswehr today.

From Spiegel and Stern (F.R.G.)

The Fuehrer's designs recently came to light in documents discovered by the historian Günther W. Gellermann in West German military archives. There were only five copies of this "highly confidential" document.

Today, however, we learn of projects just as monstrous which their begetters, the Pentagon and NATO, are making little attempt to hide. In late 1984, at Washington's bidding, NATO adopted the "Follow-On-Forces Attack" concept known by the acronym FOFA. It envisages combined strikes deep into the hinterland of the Warsaw Treaty countries with sophisticated binary chemical weapons.

The Pentagon is bending over backwards to get binary munitions deployed in Europe. The NATO Defence Planning Committee is already discussing the issue and a decision is expected in May, one that will no doubt be favourable.

What Washington is telling the allies is that these weapons will be manufactured and stored in the U.S., and only rushed to Europe, notably the F.R.G., in the event of a "crisis." But it is Washington that will determine when that "crisis" has set in. The West Europeans are to act the part of silently assenting extras.

D. MAXIMOV

WHAT

Rear A
Howe of th
a carpet in
biggest sea
ed there w
six ships
Fleet last r
ral's wake
and 500 o
market pla

However,
wholesale
described a
rachi journ
hosted an
U.S. naval

**This old
entire day
awning be
the Islamab
gives him n**

Photo fr

BETRAYED

These fifteen weddings were at the centre of attention in Israel. Fifteen couples had decided to get married without the blessing of the state. True, this was because they knew their marriages would not be authorized by the Rabbinate, as they were Falashas, not "real" Jews according to Israeli law.

Only 18 months ago Israel's propaganda machine was wallowing in the details of how the "humane" Israelis were sparing neither effort nor shekels to "save" their black co-religionists as much from the famine that had struck Africa as from Ethiopia's revolutionary government, supposedly persecuting this ancient Jewish tribe. Helped by the CIA and the U.S. Air Force Tel Aviv airlifted them out across Sudan, though even at that time the "evacuation" was seen by many as the forcible deportation of confused and hungry people.

These suspicions were well founded. When the fanfares died away, the Falashas found themselves outside Tel Aviv in "absorption centres," strikingly reminiscent of concentration camps. They will now be moved to militarized settlements in occupied Arab territories, fortified townships near the Lebanese border or, at best, Israeli "development towns" with jobs for only one in three. Even these glowing prospects, h
be available until the Falash
ed rituals that differ from
practice and have learned
instead of their ancient tong
being, they have been depr
ical rights, forbidden to mar
officially segregated from "

True, Immigration Minister
that he might legalize the
nothing more. The Falashas h
propaganda function and
longer care what happens to

ONE BUY IN KARACHI?

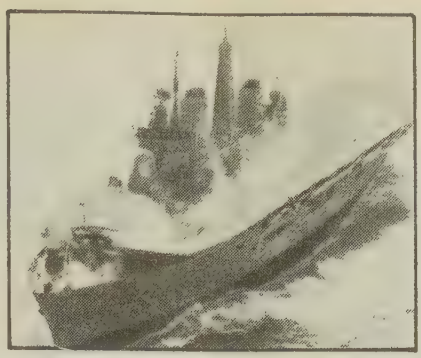
ral Macarthy, commander of the U.S. Seventh Fleet, who presumably did not buy anything, having come, according to the magazine, just "to look around." Mag observes that both fleets include Karachi in their zones of operations, even to the point of squabbling over it.

Be that as it may, the Americans have already struck their main bargain with Islamabad. General Zia ul-Haq's administration has agreed to hand over for the Pentagon's use the newly modernized airfields at Pasni, Jiwani and Gwadar on the Makran coast, as well as the airfields at Panjgur and Chagai near the Iranian and Afghan borders, Attaullah Mengal, former chief minister of Beluchistan and a prominent figure in the Pakistan opposition, said in an interview to the Indian PTI agency. At Gwadar, he said, the Americans have already built tracking and control systems for their fleets. However, the greatest "trophy" is naturally Karachi, to which the Pentagon now has free access. According to Mengal, a whole network of roads striking out from Karachi to various points along the Makran coast has been built for the American Rapid Deployment Force. All the two American fleets have to do now is to see which gets what.

A recent U.S. congressional report lists Pakistan as one of the countries where the U.S. is entitled to have bases. Evidently Congress believes this right is a function of the $3.2 billion in military and economic aid already paid out, not to mention the $4 billion now being considered.

Rear Admiral Howe bought a carpet, but Washington has bought bases.

E. LVOV



WITH BRITISH SUPPORT

The aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious and six other British warships have set out on an eight-month-long voyage to the Pacific and Indian oceans. To start with, the British naval squadron will take part in the Rimpac exercises.

The London journal New Statesman would like to know what Her Majesty's naval forces are doing in the Pacific and why London has now joined the Rimpac exercises, which earlier involved only ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand, and the U.S.) plus Canada and Japan.

The objective of Rimpac-86, as we wrote in our issue No. 45 for last year, is to rehearse a scenario envisaging landings on the Soviet Kuril Islands and the Kamchatka Peninsula. Simulating the landing targets is Hawaii, one of whose islands, considered sacred by the inhabitants, will be massively bombed and shelled. The Hawaiians are against, but this does not bother the Pentagon. What Washington wants, as well as perfecting its military plans, is to "make an impression" on the intransigent states in the South Pacific, especially New Zealand, which wish to make it a denuclearized zone. Washington has bent over backwards to get New Zealand's Labour government to abandon its anti-nuclear and anti-war policies. It employed blatant economic pressure and political blackmail, and is now using Rimpac-86 to exert **military** pressure. Further to emphasize the point, Britain was asked to give support. After all, New Zealand is a former British dominion and its obstreperous Labour government might be expected to heed the voice of its erstwhile masters.

London was only too delighted to help. The Admiralty must have been extremely gratified. It was nice for the former "ruler of the waves" to be invited; even if the venture is in someone else's interest.

M. LEONIDOV

HMS Illustrious on the attack. The Hawaiis! Or intransigent New Zealand!
Photo from New Statesman (Britain)

PUT A LITTLE MUSIC TO IT

Legislators in Maryland, next door to Washington DC, have reached a remarkable decision. By a vote of seven to four a committee of the state legislature has rejected a bill forbidding the sale to minors of discs and tapes carrying obscene material or promoting violence.

That the sharks of mass culture have been corrupting boys and girls with porn from a tender age is nothing new. "You couldn't say some of these things on a public street legally, but put a little music to the words and that's supposed to make it all right," one of the sponsors of the rejected bill indignantly commented. The astronomical profits attendant on sales also become "all right."

Before coming to their decision, the committee members heard boys and girls testify as to how they liked listening to musically-backed instructions for incest, multiple rape and suicide. They don't care for it too much, it seems. Young Marylanders, some of whom had been psychologically disturbed by porn and the cult of violence, marched to the Assembly house carrying placards reading "Rock music almost ruined my life," and "Stop the killer music!" The lawmakers listened and looked on, only to take the abovementioned decision. A ban on "musical" obscenity would infringe on personal freedom, and that's un-American.

Our Own Correspondent

New York

RIPENING GRAPES OF WRATH

The situation in South Africa today presents a sharp contrast to what it was two or three years ago. For more than two years now the people of South Africa have been storming the bastions of racism, threatening its very existence. In an effort to preserve their domination, the racists are stepping up repressive action against all those fighting for the abolition of apartheid. The racist regime is becoming steadily more aggressive. It is exerting crude pressure on Lesotho and Botswana, and is waging undeclared wars against Mozambique and Angola through the agency of mercenaries. Direct aid to the UNITA bands is being rendered by the U.S., which has begun supplying them with up-to-date arms. The U.S. Administration has thus given its backing not only to the racists themselves but also their hirelings. South Africa and the United States have also made Zimbabwe their target; here too mercenary bands have gone into action. The war in Namibia is likewise continuing.

DOCTRINE OF BRIGANDAGE

Americans will have to further pare down their family budgets this year to pay for President Reagan's undeclared wars in various parts of the world, in particular in southern Africa. The Afghan counterrevolutionaries have already been given $470 million and $100 million is to be appropriated for the Nicaraguan contras. An initial sum of $15 million has been earmarked for the demolition of Angolan villages and the slaughter of their inhabitants by UNITA bands, and the figure could eventually run to $500 million.

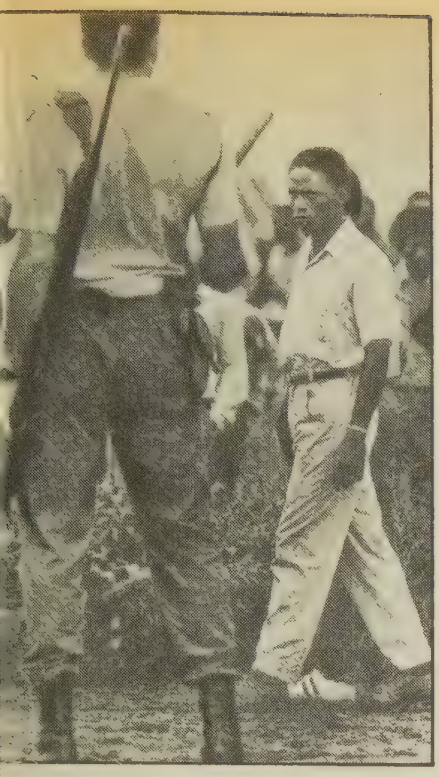
Washington is seeking to justify its interventionist fever by pseudo-patriotic rhetoric, by invoking a non-existing "communist threat," and by talking about defence of democracy the world over being the United States' "historical mission." Accordingly, generally recognized concepts are deliberately distorted. "Defence of democracy" takes the form of bloody subversion, "reconciliation of opposing sides" boils down to increasing military aid to anti-popular forces, and "constructive engagement" becomes aiding and abetting the apartheid regime. And when the White House talks about safeguarding peace, what it really means is confrontation on the brink of a global catastrophe.

The purpose of the "Reagan doctrine" of stepping up U.S. interference in regional conflicts is to counter the Soviet Union's proposals for the normalization of the international situation and to cover up America's preparations for the militarization of outer space.

The "Reagan doctrine" should not be regarded merely as a new wrapping for the old policy of confrontation. The undermining of progressive regimes with a view to overthrowing them is only the immediate aim. The jubilation of the rights about Reagan putting America "on the offensive" stems from the fact that his doctrine provides for something new and dangerous for the newly independent countries and the whole world. It could be a matter of "a new generation counterrevolution" in areas proclaimed "of vital interest to the United States" and in which, in Washington's view, the interests of the Soviet Union and the United States come into conflict. Local reactionaries are combined with professional mercenaries in well-trained and well-armed bands capable of any crime, something of a complement to the Rapid Deployment Force. This is the role assigned the Nicaraguan contras, UNITA, and the Afghan counterrevolutionaries. The attempts to pass these bands off as "freedom fighters" are merely a futile exercise designed to lay some sort of ideological groundwork for brigandage.

Southern Africa is one of the areas now being used as testing ground for the new doctrine. In all of them the same policy is being pursued: increas-

Funeral of victims of racist terror.



Confrontation.

ed military aid to bandits, whipping up of tension, pressure on lawful governments to force them to "make peace" with the counterrevolution. All of which is accompanied by anti-communist, anti-Soviet rhetoric. What Reagan said in February about aid to counterrevolutionaries of all kinds to help them "not just to fight and die for freedom but to fight and win freedom" was addressed to the UNITA bands, the contras and other U.S. hirelings.

In southern Africa a variant of the United States' new globalism is being tried out with the participation of a "friendly country"—South Africa. Washington is out not only to cancel out the progressive gains of Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and other independent countries of the region. The "Reagan doctrine" is aimed also at the preservation of white minority rule in South Africa as a guarantee of "stability" in that country and in the entire region. In this doctrine of brigandage, one can clearly discern a striving consonant with that of the South African racists, to prevent a just settlement in Namibia, to keep a puppet regime there in the saddle.

In the non-aligned countries not everyone is as yet aware of the sinister implications of the "Reagan doctrine," assuming that it applies only to radical regimes. Actually it is spearheaded against all countries that are unwilling to line up with the U.S. in the confrontation between West and East. The fact that the CIA, the main executor of this policy, has notably stepped up covert operations in many areas is indicative. Its spending on these operations this year will exceed half a billion dollars—much more than in any year since the Vietnam war. It is not for nothing that the interdepartmental 208 Committee was set up to supervise subversive operations and direct regional crisis situations into the "right channel."

By placing the emphasis in its foreign policy on subversive, covert methods, the White House is out to intimidate the entire world, to restore America's role as the world policeman, and to escalate international tension. Southern Africa is one of the areas where intervention by the U.S., which operates in league with the racist authorities of South Africa, has created a critical explosive situation.

B. ASOYAN

MASK DISCARDED

Ever since the Reagan Administration took office its high-ranking spokesmen have been lavish with assurances that U.S. policy in southern Africa is aimed at ensuring peace and stability in that region. Yet in the past five years not a single one of its problems has been resolved. More, these problems have been exacerbated and become more difficult to resolve. Why?

Southern Africa is the only region on the continent where racism and colonialism are still entrenched. U.N. General Assembly and Security Council resolutions calling for the abolition of the apartheid regime in South Africa and the granting of the right to self-determination to the people of Namibia have not been carried out. This applies in particular to the Security Council Resolution 435 adopted more than seven years ago, which outlines the procedure for Namibia's transition to independence. All the Western powers, the U.S. included, voted for that resolution, and the South African government too raised no objections.

For nearly 20 years now the South African army has been trying to suppress the liberation struggle waged by the people of Namibia under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO).

There is no peace either on the territory of Angola and Mozambique, where with the help of the counterrevolutionary bands of UNITA (in Angola) and MNR (in Mozambique), Pretoria is waging an undeclared war against the governments of these countries in an effort to overthrow them. South African commandos make bandit raids into the territory of other neighbouring countries as well. The outrages are committed under the pretext that guerrilla detachments of the African National Congress are supposedly being formed in those countries. The relations between South Africa and its neighbours are thus another pressing problem that calls for speedy solution. Without this there can be neither peace nor stability in the region.

The key issue here is the existence of the racist regime in South Africa. For this regime is to blame for the steady growth of tension, the bloodshed in Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, and in South Africa itself.

Such is the true situation. But the imperialist policy makers, with their prejudiced, distorted view of things see their task not in supporting the black majority that has risen to resolute struggle against the apartheid regime, but in perpetuating that regime. Realizing, however, that in its present form it cannot survive, the U.S. is impelling the South African rulers to "modernize" it, or, in other words, to discard some of the more odious racist laws while preserving apartheid as a system of racial and social oppression.

At the beginning of this year, the U.S. and South Africa took a number of "initiatives" which clearly indicate what kind of a settlement in southern Africa they are seeking. While conflicting with one another on the face of it, these "initiatives" are actually part of the same political intrigue.

Addressing parliament on March 4, Pieter Botha announced his intention to embark as of August 1 this year on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 435. The Western press hastened to present this as a "sharp turn" in South African policy on Namibia. The move was hailed in Washington. Frank Wisner, a high-ranking State Department official, visiting Pretoria, said that "if all parties put their shoulders to the wheel... there is a chance Namibian independence could be achieved. If independence could be secured that could be the beginning of peace inside Angola, a keystone put in place in an orderly framework, in this part of the world." The U.S. was the only "party" to "put its shoulder" to the South African wheel.

Why? Because the Botha statement was actually a bluff. For he again made the solution of the Namibia question dependent on the withdrawal from Angola of the Cuban military contingent, in that country at the request of the Angolan government to help it repulse South African aggression. Since Angola became independent South Africa has made at least a dozen armed incursions into its territory, and South African troops have not been fully withdrawn from there to this day.

The presence of the Cuban contingent in Angola presents no problem to southern Africa. It has not invaded the territory of Namibia, not to speak of South Africa. It does not even take part in action against the UNITA bands. Luanda has advanced concrete proposals for the gradual withdrawal of the Cuban troops, provided the South African army, in fulfilment of Resolution 435, pulls out of Namibia thereby lessening the danger of another incursion into Angola. But Pretoria has rejected these constructive proposals. It has also torpedoed two meetings with SWAPO by demanding its virtual surrender.

So long as South African troops are concentrated near Angola's southern frontier and UNITA bands are running amok inside the country, Luanda cannot dispense with the help of the Cuban contingent, without which it would be left alone to face the racist troops armed to the teeth and operating in league with their stooges.

Before Botha presented his plan for Namibia, UNITA chief Savimbi was in the United States. His meetings with President Reagan and other high-ranking Administration officials resulted, according to Chester Crocker, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, in a definite decision on material aid to UNITA. The reference was to the delivery to UNITA of $15 million worth of arms, mainly anti-aircraft and anti-tank systems.

But no sooner had Savimbi left the hospitable United States than the New York Times carried the clearly inspired report that Savimbi might not get the promised arms; this would depend on the position of the Angolan government, in other words, on its readiness to agree to the withdrawal of the Cuban contingent. More, Luanda is expected also to agree to negotiate with Savimbi with the object of setting up a "coalition government" taking in the UNITA chiefs. This is an obvious case of blackmail, of pressuring a sovereign state by threatening to arm its enemies.

The U.S. also associates its plans for Namibia with pressure on Luanda. The White House has visions of putting an end to "communist forces" in Angola and resolving the Namibia problem in the interests of the U.S. and South Africa. A "moderate, pro-Western" Luanda, in Washington's opinion, would agree to a radical revision of its relations with SWAPO, in other words, would deny its support to the Namibian patriots. And, according to this scenario, a militarily weakened SWAPO could easily be persuaded to accept the American model for a future independent Namibia. In a word, it would agree to turning Namibia into a puppet state after the pattern of the South African bantustans while preserving intact the economic positions of the white minority and foreign capital.

All this looks simple enough on the American political blueprint. The reality, however, is more complicated. The CIA for instance, holds that even with American military aid Savimbi cannot gain the upper hand over the People's Republic of Angola and induce its government to negotiate with UNITA. Luanda's position on this score has been made quite clear: no talks with the racists' puppets. Contrary to the New York Times report, Savimbi is already getting American arms—Stinger missiles. This is bound further to aggravate the situation in southern Africa and create additional obstacles to the search for a peaceful settlement of its problems.

The U.S. emissaries Crocker and Wisner can no longer lay claim to the role of "intermediaries" in South Africa's talks with Angola and SWAPO. For by deciding to supply arms to Savimbi, the U.S. has openly sided with South Africa in the conflict in the south of the continent. The mask of "mediation" has been cast off.

Thus, the kind of settlement the U.S. wants in southern Africa is anything but peaceful. U.S. diplomacy is out to resolve the problems of this region as well from neoglobalist positions, by imposing its will on the peoples of South Africa, Namibia, Angola and Mozambique. But it is a futile policy.

"A just settlement in southern Africa calls for the solution of a number of fundamental problems," Mikhail Gorbachev said at the end of March, speaking at a dinner in honour of the Mozambican leader Samora Machel. "Above all, it calls for the total cessation of aggressive racist sallies against the African frontline states and the prevention of such sallies in the future. Secondly, for the immediate solution of the problem of the decolonization of Namibia, which has been driven into an impasse by the policy of Washington and Pretoria. Thirdly, for the speediest abolition of apartheid in South Africa, that inhuman system of race oppression and exploitation, the very existence of which is an international disgrace. We want Namibia and South Africa to be free, we want people of all races to live there in peace, equality and concord."

N. RESHETNYAK

THE RACISTS AT A DEAD END

South African President Pieter Botha's decision to lift the state of emergency introduced in July 1985 in 36 districts of the country was not unexpected. It had been in preparation on the quiet since last December, when the President rescinded the emergency legislation in eight districts on the plea that the "revolutionary climate" in African townships was "fast losing momentum." In early February Minister of Law and Order Louis Le Grange told parliament that the state of emergency had had the "desired effect." It had unquestionably had an effect, but not the kind the racists needed.

The emergency was proclaimed in a situation marked by unprecedented mass anti-apartheid actions of the black population which the Pretoria authorities could not cope with using their usual methods of repression. Troops were sent in to help the police suppress the mass movement. The punitive forces were guaranteed impunity whatever excesses they committed. Use of firearms against demonstrators became standard practice. More than 800 were killed while the

South African troops on Angolan territory.

The United States imports from the countries of southern Africa nearly half of the strategic raw materials used by its military-industrial complex. South Africa alone provides 57 per cent of the vanadium, 48 per cent of the platinum and 30 per cent of the chromium needed by American industry.

Eleven out of 27 raw materials of srategic importance for the U.S. come from South Africa.

About 15 per cent of the uranium required by the capitalist world economy is obtained from Namibia.

Roughly one fifth of the 2,000 transnational corporations operating in South Africa are American. Six thousand other U.S. companies have commercial and financial dealings with that country.

The biggest monopolies operating in South Africa include Ford, General Motors, and Mobil Oil. They account for half of all U.S. private investments in southern Africa, which total $2.5 billion.

* * *

PLUNDER OF NAMIBIA'S NATURAL WEALTH CONTINUES. By the beginning of the present decade there were 53 transnational corporations in that country, 15 of them controlled by American monopolies.

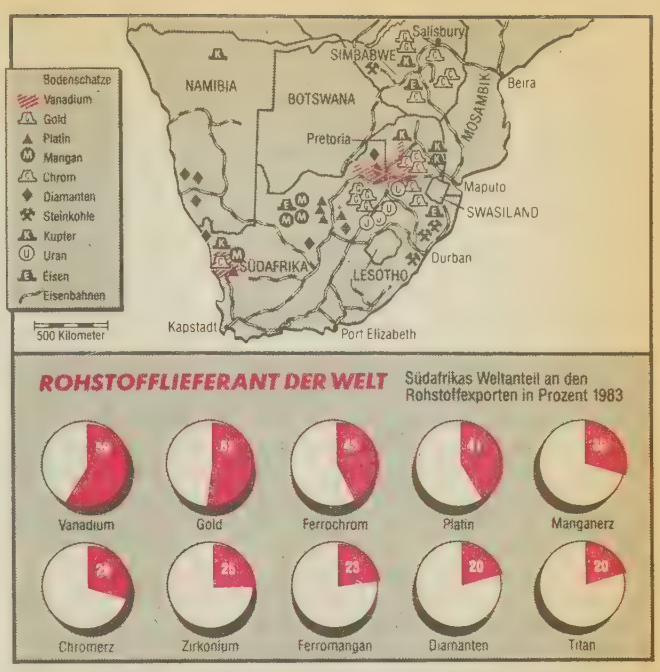
The Tsumeb Corporation exports from Namibia copper, silver and germanium.

The American Bethlehem Steel and Nord Mining corporations control, through their subsidiaries, tungsten and tin mining.

Together with the French Aquitaine and Vendome companies, U.S. firms exploit Namibia's copper and silver deposits.

The Bank of America, the Chase Manhattan Bank and the First National City Bank are members of a consortium that finances uranium mining.

American companies operate also in the spheres of geological prospecting, agriculture, construction and trade.



Mineral deposits in southern Africa.

---

emergency laws were in operation.

But notwithstanding the unceasing police and army violence the struggle did not abate; on the contrary, it gained momentum. Le Grange himself admits that in the past six months there have been 3,400 disturbances, an average of 20 a day. The terror methods used by the racists have actually hardened resistance; the Africans no longer flee from the punitive forces. Defying death, they more and more often fight back. An Associated Press correspondent reported that in mid-February furious street battles took place for three days in succession in the Johannesburg township of Alexandra.

For a long time many Africans were—and to some extent still are—under the influence of so-called moderate leaders who call for an end to violence, addressing themselves, however, not to the authorities but to the Africans. Now the situation is changing. Seven years ago in the same township of Alexandra a priest named Sam Buti dissuaded the authorities from going ahead with their plan to raze the township. Buti was the hero of the day, and the grateful inhabitants of Alexandra elected him mayor. He preached non-violence and moderation and his flock listened to him. After the February events, Buti can no longer appear in public. The Africans identify him with the government which sent its troops against them. His house is now guarded by soldiers.

Radical-minded Africans do not forgive those of their compatriots who collaborate with the racist authorities. According to police reports, in the past year and a half there have been some 100 attacks on the homes of African policemen and members of municipal councils, more than 20 collaborationists have been killed and hundreds have preferred to resign. The "self-government" structure created by the racists in black townships has to all intents and purposes collapsed. The puppet municipal councils are being replaced by the population with committees representing an embryonic form of people's government. Regional and district committees of this kind are already virtually in control of African townships around Johannesburg and Pretoria and in the Cape Province.

While the political positions of the regime are weakening, the ranks of its opponents are steadily growing. The racists and their black stooges like Chief Gatsha Buthelezi have not succeeded in discrediting the African National Congress. A teacher of law at a Johannesburg university, Tom Lodge, told a Reuters correspondent that the popularity of the ANC was increasing from day to day as was the ability of its supporters to lead the people. Professor Robert Schrire of Cape Town University observed that the ANC grows stronger in adversity.

Despite the repressive action taken by the authorities against the leaders of the United Democratic Front (UDF), which brings together 700 anti-racist organizations, it continues to function, rallying the masses to the fight against apartheid. Last year saw the establishment of a powerful trade union federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), which calls for an end to apartheid and for the withdrawal of troops from the African townships.

There is growing differentiation in the white community more and more of whose members are beginning to come out against the disastrous policy of the government. Indicative in this respect were the recent conviction of a young white who had undergone guerrilla training abroad and the arrest of two white women, one of them a journalist, for organizing bomb explosions at Johannesburg police stations.

The South African government has come under heavy pressure also from its main social base—the business world, which holds Botha responsible, among other things, for the weakening of the rand, the fact that foreign investments are beginning to be withdrawn and that inflation is at its highest level in 66 years. The South African Federated Chamber of Industries has demanded that the government carry out reforms and has even advanced its own reform programme.

The present upsurge of the anti-racist movement in South Africa began in February 1984, more than two years ago.

The Botha government has been unable to cope with it. The demand for the abolition of apartheid has been mounting both within the country and abroad. Even the Reagan Administration, with characteristic hypocrisy, has begun to criticize the regime. The racists find themselves in an impasse.

In these circumstances Botha, hoping to stem the tide of protest, resorted to another political trick. Speaking in parliament on January 31, he "outlined plans to reform aspects of apartheid." He promised to return South African citizenship to the inhabitants of the bantustans which had been proclaimed "independent states," to abolish the system of passes without which the Africans have no right to travel in the country, and to establish a National Statutory Council with the participation of all races, the Africans included. At the same time he stressed that such cornerstones of apartheid as separate residential areas, separate education and compulsory classification of the population according to race would remain unchanged.

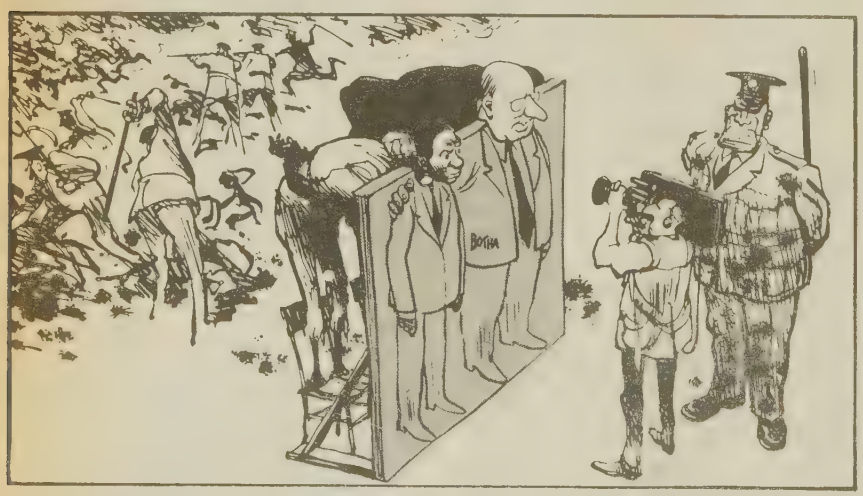
The President's speech was welcomed by the South African business world. This is understandable, for the free movement of Africans enables the employers to make more rational use of this cheap labour force. Botha's promises were welcomed also by the U.S. State Department which, the Paris Le Monde observed, had just been waiting for an opportunity to praise Pretoria. But in anti-apartheid quarters the President's speech met with a negative reaction. The ANC described his promises as "empty and false." The UDF declared that Botha "failed completely to provide a real solution" to the crisis and that his speech was "simply doublespeak." And Bishop Desmond Tutu said it "was nothing more than eyewash."

The "reform plans" were sharply criticized by the leader of the white opposition Progressive Federal Party Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert. He resigned from the leadership of that party in protest.

If Botha's promises were designed to weaken the struggle against apartheid they misfired. Within days of his speech the massive demonstrations and clashes with the police resumed, developing at times into street battles. Bombs exploded now in one now in another town inhabited by whites.

Botha could hardly have expected his vague promises to have any magic effect on the situation in South Africa. As like as not his speech was addressed to the foreign banks which at that time were about to discuss deferment of payment on Pretoria's foreign debts. To avoid conflict with the anti-racist public opinion of their own countries, the banks needed some evidence of "good will" on the part of the racists, if only a semblance of movement towards reforms. In this respect the President's move did have an effect: the banks agreed to grant Pretoria a year's deferment.

But during his contacts with the intermediary for the banks, the Swiss financier Fritz Leutwiler, Botha had doubtless also promised to lift the emergency, which he did on March 7. However, at the same time he asked parliament to speed up the procedure of adoption of whatever laws were needed to enable the police to cope with disturbances. This was seen in South Africa as an indication that the government proposed to introduce something in the order of a permanent state of emergency. The repressive actions continue. In the past two years of unrest nearly 1,400 people have lost their lives.



One way of creating a semblance of racial harmony in South Africa.

In his January speech in parliament Botha promised, apart from some reforms, to "cooperate with moderate black leaders." Who are these "moderates"? Botha supplied the answer in an interview to a Washington Times correspondent in March. Among them he listed Chief Minister of the Kwazoulou bantustan Buthelezi, an African politician who has earned the approval of the racist authorities by his attacks on the ANC, UDF and COSATU, which he accuses of wanting to establish a "totalitarian regime" in South Africa. Buthelezi himself is opposed to "violence," meaning mass action, and he collaborates closely with the authorities with an eye to occupying a high government post in the future. The above-mentioned Slabbert has compared Buthelezi with the Zimbabwe Bishop Muzorewa, who in the late 1970s headed the puppet government set up by the racists in southern Rhodesia and later suffered a shattering defeat at the polls.

In the Washington Times interview Botha also named other "strong leaders," such as the heads of Transkei, Ciskei or Venda—all puppets appointed by Pretoria to head the bantustans to which it granted fictitious independence. To these he added the leaders of the "self-governing territories," i.e., bantustans that have not yet been granted "independence." Botha is out to turn the country into something of a confederation of the bantustans and "white" South Africa. Such plans, ANC president Oliver Tambo has said, are aimed at perpetuating the apartheid system and are resolutely rejected by the ANC. Nor have they the approval of the African majority, which is fighting not for the transformation, or, as it is euphemistically called, "modernization" of apartheid, but for its total abolition, for the elimination of everything that has been engendered by this inhuman system of racial and social oppression.

In the same interview Botha predicted that it would take a whole generation to carry out his plans. However, it is highly doubtful that the racists will have that much time at their disposal. The people of South Africa have already pronounced judgement on apartheid and they are determined to carry out the sentence. The Africans are countering the plans for the bantustanization of the country with the idea of transforming South Africa into a united democratic state in which all races will enjoy equal rights and will live in peace and concord.

Y. BOCHKARYOV

Photos, map and diagram from Spiegel and Stern (F.R.G.), U.S. News and World Report, and Japan Times

Guided by the decisions of the 27th Party Congress, the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet government have adopted a resolution on measures to improve the economic mechanism in the agro-industrial complex. Our reporter Boris Kozlov asked VLADIMIR BASHMACHNIKOV, D.Sc. (Econ.), to elaborate.

RESHAPING FARM POLICY

Q.: Let us begin with the present state of affairs in agriculture. Why does our farm policy need to be reshaped?

A.: Our agriculture made a certain headway in the eleventh five-year-plan period. The output of farm products, especially in animal husbandry, increased. Nevertheless, the overall tendency for the rate of development continued downward. At the same time the agro-industrial complex in general and agricultural production in particular have had less and less to show for the capital invested in them, and the output of produce for every ruble invested in agriculture has continued to diminish. If this situation persists, we shall fall far short of the targets set for our Food Programme in the twelfth five-year-plan period.

Q.: How has such a situation arisen?

A.: It is axiomatic that productive forces can develop if they are backed by appropriate production relations. This is no philosophical abstraction. The economic management system which takes the economic interests of social groups, work collectives and individual workers into account should be adequate to the tasks set by the productive forces at a given time. Upon attaining a new level of development, material production makes new demands on the economic management system—this has always been the case in history. If no changes are made, or if these changes are not in full accord with the objective requirements, elements of stagnation will inevitably ensue. This has happened to us before, but as soon as we succeeded in improving the management system, production began to grow at an accelerated rate.

Let us recall the period of war communism and the New Economic Policy (NEP) in the 1920s. Brought into conformity with the demands of the productive forces, production relations at that time gave an impetus to the national economy. In the postwar years the development of the agrarian sector also slowed down, but a revision of purchasing prices and a number of other measures pushed the development trend up again. Another deceleration of the agricultural production growth rate followed, and again effective measures were taken with the result that in the eighth five-year-plan period our farm produce output grew faster than that in any capitalist country. In the ninth five-year-plan period the situation became slightly worse than it had been in the previous one, but growth rates remained quite high. In the tenth and eleventh five-year-plan periods they declined again. This was only to be expected in a situation where no efforts were made to improve the economic management system. We did not only stop halfway; we largely departed from the principles of overall economic reform which had been adopted and followed earlier (in the mid-sixties). Cost-accounting gradually became a follow-up measure and ceased to be a stimulus in work. Deprived of economic levers, many managers were compelled to use administrative ones instead. The incentive to seek ways of strengthening the agrarian sector at local level waned. Executives fell back into the old habit of waiting for instructions from the top. This was not only the result of increased management by command, but also of overcentralization in regulating work of individual enterprises and amalgamations in the agro-industrial complex. This practice led to adverse results which came to be especially in evidence in the eleventh five-year-plan period. The need for a radical reform of the economic mechanism prompted us to seek Lenin's advice and draw on the experience of those who started building socialism in the twenties.

Q.: But is not agriculture today quite different from what it was then? A small-scale peasant economy has long given way to large-scale, mechanized, high-yield, organized production. Surely today's methods are not to be compared with those used in the twenties?

A.: The situations are different, of course, but they have certain features in common. Our objective today is to make our collective and state farms more idependent, to give greater scope for initiative, and economic methods of management. So we cannot but turn to the food tax idea that Lenin advanced in 1921 and use it under the different conditions of today.

Let's look back to the early years of the revolution. The peasants did not accept the system of surplus appropriation. They became apathetic with the result that food production fell. Things could be put right only by giving the peasants an incentive to produce surplus grain. Analyzing the socio-economic situation then obtaining, Lenin said: "We overdid the nationalization of industry and trade, clamping down on local exchange of commodities." Referring to the promotion of local exchange of commodities as an important stimulus to production, he summed up: "The proprietor can and will surely make an effort in his own interest when he knows that all his surplus produce will not be taken away

from him, and that he will only have to pay a tax which should whenever possible be fixed in advance."

From this point of view the present situation resembles that analyzed by Lenin. Where the question of centralization in regulating production and food distribution is concerned, we have again gone further than objective economic laws permitted, minimizing the importance of local exchange and unnecessarily curtailing the rights of local agricultural authorities.

Here is the procedure as it has existed to date. The central authority set farm produce delivery quotas for each republic, region, district and farm. All products supplied went into the common centralized stock and were then distributed under centralized control. Even if stored in a warehouse in a town, food products did not actually belong to the town. It was exclusively the responsibility of the higher planning authorities to decide what share of these products could be consumed on the territory in question. True, local authorities had the formal right to use the above-plan products to improve food supplies to their own area but since the planned food production quotas were quite high it was not always possible to create a stock of above-plan products.

Q.: This has been the case until recently. The CPSU Central Committee and the government have now adopted the resolution on changing the mechanism of agro-industrial complex management. Could you describe these changes in greater detail?

A.: We seek, above all, to change the qualitative relationship between the centralized control of the food supply and the promotion of democratic principles of management. Centralized control will not be weakened on the whole, but its character will change. Economic methods will play the leading role. In the question of planning food production, supply and distribution the central authorities will confine themselves to setting the amounts to be supplied to centralized stocks. From now on the state will specify only the amount of food a constituent republic or a region is to deliver to the national or the given republic's centralized stock (strategic reserves and provisions intended for certain cities and certain northern areas). These deliveries will constitute about 20-30 per cent of the country's total agricultural output. The rest of the produce will go to the local population. The republics and regions will be entitled to exchange various food products. They will decide on their own investment policy and their own investment priorities. This is bound to make the agro-industrial complex more balanced. Furthermore, the republics and regions will have the right to regulate purchasing prices and raise them with a view to stimulating the production of labour-intensive items. An important point is that plans for deliveries of products to centralized stocks will not be revised. Therefore, should any region fail to raise sufficient farm produce, the short-fall will no longer be made good from a centralized stock, that is, at the expense, of other regions.

Q.: You mentioned the right of local authorities to pursue their own regional investment policy. What will this reform mean in essence?

A.: Before the system of agro-industrial management was changed and before the State Committee for the Agro-Industrial Complex of the U.S.S.R. was set up, state capital investment plans, drawn up by the U.S.S.R. State Planning Committee, went through—first an all-Union ministry, then the appropriate ministry of a constituent republic, and finally a regional amalgamation or trust before it reached an enterprise. In planning the construction of production premises, cultural institutions, service facilities and homes, the ministries, often with an eye to their narrow departmental economic interests, failed to take into account the common interests of regions and the need for balanced development in the regional agro-industrial complex. Local authorities did not have much say in adjusting departmental plans. This caused imbalances in agricultural development and increasingly substantial labour and product losses.

The establishment of a system of integrated local agro-industrial complex management bodies and a measure of decentralization in planning make it possible not only to remove the imbalances but to prevent them. Regional authorities will now be interested in making effective use of their aggregate resources to keep the population supplied with food. Food production is expected to increase by 15-20 per cent thanks to a rational use by each region of the resources invested in the agro-industrial complex.

Q.: To what extent will the food tax principle be applied to collective and state farms?

A.: The regional and district agro-industrial complex management bodies will set collective and state farms fixed annual quotas of product deliveries to the state. These quotas will depend on specific local conditions as, for instance, soil quality, fixed assets per farmer, and whether a farm is adequately staffed.

Another innovation is that the centralized delivery quotas can now be fulfilled with produce from both collective and state farms and subsidiary individual holdings. Collective and state farms will now be able to take local conditions into account in deciding on forms of production. For instance, they could fatten some of their animals at livestock complexes or on small farms, and a considerable proportion (say, of suckling pigs) at subsidiary small holdings owned by collective farm members or state farm workers.

Q.: Who will sell the produce from these holdings, the collective farmers themselves?

A.: It will be marketed by the collective or state farms through local organizations at prices agreed on with the owners of the subsidiary holdings in advance. So the latter will get from the collective farm quite a handsome cash remuneration for their work. Such an arrangement will suit collective farm chairmen and state farm managers as well: the output of a subsidiary holding will be taken into account when assessing a collective or state farm's total performance. And there is nothing, of course, to stop the subsidiary plot owners selling their surplus products on the market on their own. Even if this is the case, these products will be taken into consideration when measuring a collective or state farm's output against the target set. Consequently, the administration will do nothing to obstruct subsidiary farming.

Q.: The idea of the food tax is to get the farms interested in producing more surpluses. What provisions have been made in this connection?

A.: The produce sold to the state over and above plan targets will be purchased at one and a half times to twice the usual price. Collective and state farms which fulfil fixed delivery quotas will be offered goods that are up to now in short supply, such as farm machines and mixed fodder. Moreover, collective and state farms will be able to sell a substantial proportion of their planned fruit and vegetable crop—and of the produce grown over and above the plan—not through state procurement centres, but through consumers' cooperatives or on the open market at market or contract (i.e., higher) prices.

From 1987 on, every collective and state farm will pay a special tax to the state. The amount will depend on soil quality, the degree to which a given farm is mechanized and whether it is adequately staffed. Farms operating under less favourable conditions will pay less than those which have high-quality soils and are well equipped with machines. This will compel the better off collective and state farms to increase their output. The state will not interfere

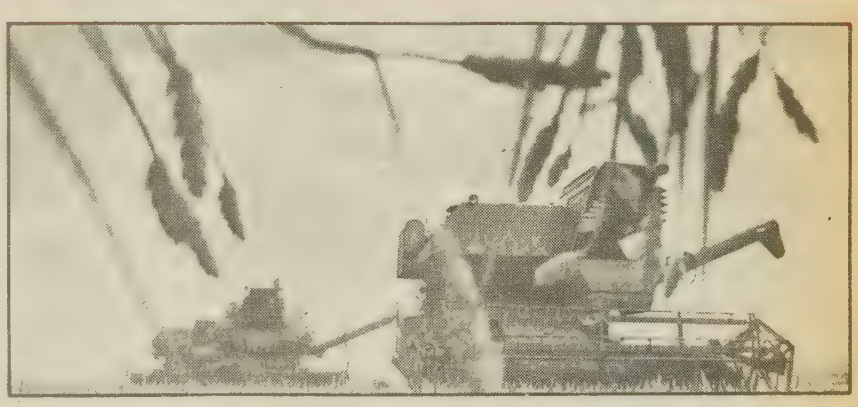
in the distribution of profits from marketed products (after deducting contributions to the budget and payments of interest on credits). Consequently, having paid its flat "fixed assets" tax, a collective or state farm will be interested in making the highest possible profit, to be used at its own discretion.

The material and technical base of Soviet agriculture is making dynamic progress. High-capacity fertilizer factories are going into operation, and the agro-industrial complex is being equipped with the latest in farm machinery.
TASS photos

Here is another important point I'd like to make. As from 1988 collective and state farms will establish their own total wage funds on the basis of a fixed ratio between the payroll and 1,000 rubles' worth of output. The more a farm produces, the bigger its wage fund will be. The wage fund will not be reduced even in a bumper-crop year. Part of the saved wage fund can be held in reserve—it belongs to the farm and no one can take it away. This reserve will see the farm through a bad year, when practically all its income is paid out in wages.

Q.: So collective and state farms have been given considerable freedom in managing their finances. But if we are to increase production, which is the object of the reform, farm managers must be given a freer hand in the field of capital construction as well. Today, for instance, a state farm manager can fund only inexpensive construction jobs at his own discretion. Projects involving big expenditure have to be approved by authorities in his republic. The go-ahead is followed by complex legal and banking procedures and by taking the matter before various departments; this does not only take much of the manager's time but gives him hardly any chance to make his own decisions.

A.: This is no longer the case. Today state farm managers and collective farm chairmen are free to undertake construction projects worth up to a million of rubles—provided, of course, the farm possesses such a sum. As from 1987, capital construction plans will be drawn up by the production organizations of the agro-industrial complex on their own. Let me underline the fact that these plans will not be subject to a revision by higher authorities, who will only take them into account when drawing up summary plans of capital construction. The procedure for financing construction projects will be greatly simplified, and the red tape involved in their endorsement by higher authorities will be cut drastically.



Q.: What will the food tax idea mean to the producers themselves—the primary work collectives and individual workers?

A.: Their incomes will depend on the size of their farm's total wage fund (which, in turn, will depend on the quality and amount of marketed products) and on the size of the material bonus fund to which part of the farm's income will go. The new procedure in building up these funds will facilitate the development of the contract system. Now farm managers can set their own team piece rates and the size of bonuses for saving materials and other work indices. Collective farmers and state farm workers will be encouraged to draw part of their pay in kind. From now on farm managers will be entitled to let their work collective have up to 25 per cent of what it has produced over and above the target provided for by the contract. The farmers may use these surplus products at their own discretion—sell them on the open market, for instance.

The contract system will take a greater variety of forms. Farm management now signs contracts not only with entire collectives but with individual teams too. In the twelfth five-year-plan period, state farm managers and collective farm chairmen will be authorized to form family teams and sign contracts with them. Another important new development is that the contract system will be applied to experts at agro-industrial amalgamations, farm managers, and district officials. Consequently, state farm managers and collective farm chairmen will no longer be paid fixed wages. Pay rates—say, for every thousand rubles' worth of raised and marketed products—will be set for every category of executives (or individually, as the case may be). The remuneration principle will equally apply to managers and members of work collectives. This will solve many problems.

Q.: You mentioned family contracts. On what terms will family teams work?

A.: Recommendations are still being drawn up, but the idea is as follows. A contract for a term of two or three years is signed with a family, which is to work on land belonging to a given collective farm (or, as a likely option, on a leased tract of land). All the machinery needed is to be provided by the collective farm. Under the terms of the contract, the crop is to be handed over to the collective farm and the family is paid (out of receipts from the sale of the produce) in accordance with the rates agreed upon. The family is

entitled to keep a quarter of the above-plan produce and use it as it thinks fit.

I might add that in Stavropol Territory and in some districts of the Orel, Kurgan, Novosibirsk and other regions it has been decided to hand over to farmers free of charge all the above-plan products. The food tax idea is thus being realized there in full, as you see. Hopefully, this economic lever will work.

Q.: Will the other rights of the work collectives also be extended?

A.: In the current five-year-plan period the contractual aspect of the interrelationship between the management and work collectives will be finalized on the principle of mutual responsibility. Under a contract, a given collective will get certain resources which are to return certain products and a certain gross income within certain time limits. But if the management fails to provide these resources or uses them to other ends (thus reducing the earnings of the work collective), it will be held responsible for that. This system is now being tested at certain farms in Krasnodar Territory, where work collectives receive compensation for the management's breach of the contract. This stabilizes production relations and raises the work collective's creative potential.

Q.: How is the money earned by a joint effort to be divided among the members of a collective? Until very recently this problem was solved by mere injunction. Pay levelling made workers apathetic and caused frequent conflicts.

A.: Now the distribution of jointly earned money depends on the contribution each member of the collective has made to the common effort. Whether the workers are paid a daily rate or piece rate, the important thing is to distribute the earnings fairly, according to the work done.

We have forgotten the notion "artel," although the early collective farms (I mean the better collective farms, of course, which had much in common with traditional Russian artels and in which pay for work depended on end results) were quite efficient. An artel rules out any cover-ups and makes each responsible for, and dependent on, all. Responsibility fosters comradely mutual assistance and mutual control. The age-old Russian artel is now coming back, albeit with a new function.

Q.: The resolution provides for further economic experiments aimed at improving the economic mechanism. Could you elaborate on this?

A.: One such experiment consists in making collective and state farms more independent in the sphere of planning production. In fact, this work is in progress in Stavropol Territory and in a number of district agro-industrial amalgamations of the Russian Federation. In 1986 collective and state farms there have been allowed to set their own quotas for selling their products to the state, and their production targets are not subject to endorsement by higher authorities but are only taken into account by them in drawing up summary plans.

Q.: Won't such numerous experiments create the impression that the whole undertaking is also a mere experiment?

A.: Not at all. The government's decision is already being implemented. This is only the beginning, of course. The force of inertia and the inexperience of personnel in this sort of thing still make themselves felt. But the new system must be constantly improved, and this involves more experiments. There was a time when these experiments were carried out on a national scale. That turned out to be a mistake. Ideas ought to be tested in a few regions to begin with. This will be done to tight schedules. Anything that proves useful will then be applied on a wide scale.

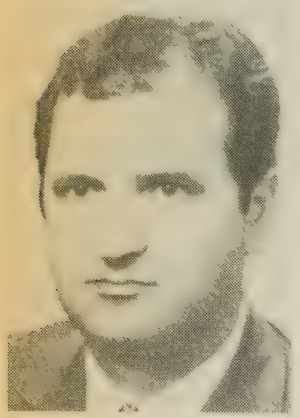
Q.: And now the last question. To what an extent is the experience of other socialist countries being drawn upon in this enormous undertaking?

A.: We studied the experience of the G.D.R. in planning and in forming agricultural production patterns at district level; of Hungary in developing subsidiary individual farming, its integration into socialized production, in using the family contract system, and in improving methods of running the economy by the state.... The experience of the fraternal countries helps us seek and find the solutions which are right for us.

Q.: Can the new structure of our economic mechanism be of use to the other CMEA countries in the long run?

A.: I think it can. Pooling experience is the essence of socialist integration. Our version of a scientifically substantiated planning and production system is useful to the CMEA member countries. Almost all of them are reshaping their agro-industrial complex management methods, improving the economic mechanism, and providing conditions favourable to farmers' creative work. Lenin's idea of how agricultural production should be organized is now being made a reality by the joint efforts of the socialist countries. ■

PEOPLE ON THE WORLD SCENE



GEORGI ATANASOV

Georgi Atanasov, elected Chairman of the Council of Ministers at the March session of the National Assembly of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, was born into a peasant family in the village of Pravoslaven, Plovdiv Region, on July 25, 1933. He graduated from the Sofia University in 1957. In 1956 he joined the Bulgarian Communist Party. For several years he did full-time YCL work as First Secretary of the Sofia City Committee of the Dimitrov Young Communist League, and Secretary of the Central Committee of the DYCL. In 1965-68 he was First Secretary of the DYCL Central Committee.

Since 1968 Georgi Atanasov has been on the staff of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party—first as head of the Department of Science and Education and then as head of the Business Management Department of the Central Committee. In December 1977 he was elected Secretary of the Central Committee. In October 1980 he was appointed First Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee.

From June 1981 to January 1984 Georgi Atanasov was at once Deputy Chairman of the State Council of the P.R.B. and Chairman of the State and People's Control Committee.

In January 1984 he was elected alternate member of the BCP Political Bureau. In March 1986 he became a member of the Political Bureau.

Georgi Atanasov is a deputy to the National Assembly.

THAELMANN SQUARE IN HAMBURG

Ernst Thaelmann, the leader of the German working class and the Communist Party of Germany, had life-long links with Hamburg. It was there, at 68 Alter Wall Street in the heart of the city, that he was born. He grew up in the Eilbeck district, and the port of Hamburg, at which Thaelmann worked for many years, was his university of life. At 17 he joined the Social Democratic Party, then became a Communist and leader of the Hamburg branch of the Party. In 1929 the Thaelmanns moved to 66 Tarpenbeckstrasse in the Eppendorf district of Hamburg. Today the ground floor of that building houses the Thaelmann Museum and the square next to it bears his name.

From Mexico City to Sydney

Wilfried Otto, who works at the museum, showed me the visitors' book. "The display made a deep impression on us. It is very important for a correct understanding of German history. No to war! No to fascism!" reads an entry by members of the Falken youth organization from Bielefeld. "The visit to the museum was very instructive. We have already drawn our conclusions and joined the German Communist Party," two visitors from Dortmund wrote. The book has many entries in foreign languages as well.

"Our museum is now known from Mexico City to Sydney," Wilfried Otto told me. "We have especially many visitors from the Soviet Union."

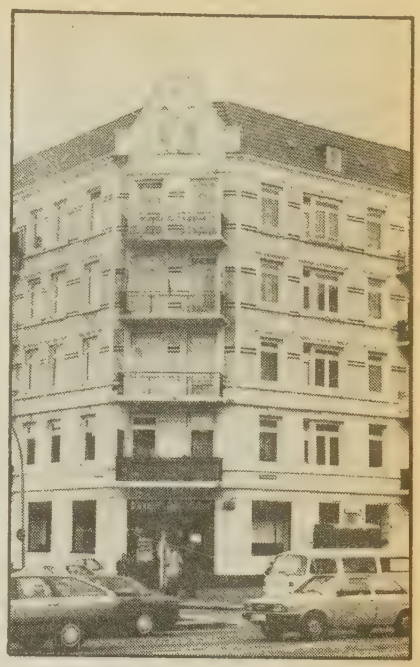
The museum was established in 1969 on the initiative of a group of Thaelmann's associates and veterans of the struggle against nazism. It was a modest beginning: initially the display was mounted in a small room, previously a shoemaker's shop. In 1976 the museum expanded into the neighbouring room, formerly a laundry. The money needed for the purpose was raised by subscription.

"It was a hard job to make the public aware of the existence of the museum," Wilfried recounted. "The authorities banned any advertising and newspapers refused to publish our paid advertisements. At first, there were perhaps more foreigners than West Germans among our visitors. The museum was better known in Vladivostok than in Hamburg. However, despite a conspiracy of silence the popularity of the museum kept growing. Last year we had more than 16,000 visitors."

The museum has more than 600 exhibits about Thaelmann's life and revolutionary activity, his struggle for the unity of the working class and for the establishment of a united anti-fascist front. Thaelmann was a true internationalist and believed that attitude to the U.S.S.R. was a touchstone for every Communist. He enjoyed immense respect and affection in the Soviet Union. On April 8, 1925, for instance, he was issued a card making him "an honorary member of the Moscow electric bulb factory." A large section of the display is devoted to a worldwide campaign for the release of the German workers' leader from nazi jails. Newspapers, leaflets and booklets published underground describe how anti-fascists in Thaelmann's home city fought in conditions of terror.

"More and more often busloads of schoolchildren come to our museum," Wilfried said. "Many of them learn for the first time what a great contribution the Communists made to the struggle against nazism. They are never told about it at school."

But such visits are not to everyone's liking. One Christian Democrat deputy to the city parliament lodged two protests against a "communist influence" on sightseeing programmes. In reply, the museum board said that a visit to the Thaelmann Museum offered schoolchildren and their teachers a unique opportunity to learn about the history of working-class struggle against the nazi regime.



House on Tarpenbeckstrasse where Ernst Thaelmann lived. Now there is a museum here.
Photo by A. Zimin

In 1982, a library and an archive set up at the museum were opened to the general public. The library has 10,000 books on the history of the German and international working-class movement.

Over Reactionary Opposition

In October 1984 the board of the museum sent a letter to the Hamburg Senate, suggesting that a street or square in the city be named after Thaelmann. Many visitors to Hamburg wondered why Thaelmann had been forgotten in his native city, the letter said, while many cities abroad had streets and squares, parks and factories called after him. His memory is especially revered in the German Democratic Republic, a country which lives according to his behests and where his ideals have become a reality.

In March 1946, the city parliament had unanimously approved a proposal put forward by its Communist faction that a street in Hamburg be named after Ernst Thaelmann, and Thaelmann Street existed in Hamburg for ten years. In the autumn of

1956, however, when anti-communist hysteria was at a crescendo, the Christian Democratic Union had the decision revoked. The reactionaries wanted not only to have the street renamed but to obliterate Thaelmann's name forever from the memory of the working people. But they failed: 30 years later thousands of Hamburg residents supported the proposal to immortalize the name of this outstanding son of the working class and call a street or square in his home city after him. The museum organized the collection of signatures to a petition. The proposal by the museum board was backed by the Social Democrats, the ruling party in Hamburg, as well as by the Greens.

The Christian Democrats again opposed the idea and the rightist press ran articles claiming that Thaelmann's party had contributed to the collapse of the Weimar Republic. The matter erupted into a debate of principle over who had been responsible for Hitler's rise to power and consequently for the war unleashed by him.

"No one will be able to evade the question of who really had the majority and held power in the Weimar Republic," Social Democrat Bodo Schuemann told the Hamburg parliament in response to anti-communist attacks by Christian Democrat speakers. "It was neither the Social Democrats nor the Communists, individually, or together. It was the conservative parties. It was they who, together with undemocratic government officials and Big Business, were responsible for the fall of the republic."

The square on which the museum, once Thaelmann's home, stands now bears his name.

The Krefeld Trial

Trying to relegate Thaelmann's name to oblivion, West German justice harboured his killers for a long time. Their names, however, were made public long ago. On April 22, 1947, the then editor of the Frankfurter Rundschau and a former inmate of Buchenwald Emil Carlebach published on the front page of his newspaper an account by his fellow inmate Marian Zgoda. On the night of August 17, 1944, Zgoda saw a prisoner he did not know being brought to the camp crematorium. SS men took the prisoner inside and immediately afterwards the reports of four shots were heard. Coming out, one SS man asked another: "Do you know who that was? The communist leader, Thaelmann."

Zgoda knew those guards well. They were members of Kommando-99, whose task was to execute inmates, mostly Soviet prisoners of war. He remembered their names: Otto, Berger, Schmidt, Warnstedt, Gust, and Stoppe.

Today, Wolfgang Otto is the sole survivor (the death of a war criminal is known as "biological amnesty" in the F.R.G.). Otto was tried by the Americans in 1947 for his part in the mass executions. Zgoda wanted to tell them about the murder of Thaelmann but the Americans explained that they had no interest in crimes perpetrated against Germans: that was supposedly the business of German courts. In 1948, Zgoda told his story under oath to a Munich investigator, Wilhelm Pueckert, but Pueckert buried the case. Small wonder as he had himself been a card-carrying nazi and an SS Scharfuehrer.

Wolfgang Otto, meanwhile, was in prison: the Americans had sentenced him to 20 years. But just four years later the Buchenwald executioner was released and even got 6,000 marks by way of "compensation for damage sustained." He settled in Geldern and became a grammar school teacher (sic!) When he retired, his service in Buchenwald was counted in his work record.

In 1962 Thaelmann's widow Rosa, who lived in the German Democratic Republic, began to seek justice for her husband's killers, and the case was taken up after her death by their daughter Irma. The investigation was opened several times and subsequently closed, allegedly for lack of "sufficient evidence." It was not till last year that the case went to court.

The decision to try the case was a major success for the democratic public in the F.R.G. The Association of Victims of Nazi Persecution—The Anti-Fascist Union, the union of former Buchenwald inmates and other organizations, including the museum board, had been demanding trial for the killer of the German communist leader for years.

Court hearings have now entered their sixth month in Krefeld. Though Wolfgang Otto is being tried as a common criminal on charges of "complicity in murder," because he had had to "follow orders," the political implication of the trial is enormous. Morality and law together demand that Thaelmann's killer be punished—but there is more to the case than that. The verdict will show how historical veracity and the crimes of the nazi regime, on the one hand, and the anti-fascist movement, on the other, are viewed in the F.R.G.

The remove of 40 years is of course having its effect on the trial. Some witnesses, including Zgoda, have already died while others cannot come to Krefeld for health reasons and the judges have to go to them to hear their testimony. The defendant's lawyers are trying to exploit these circumstances, calling in question the authenticity of the evidence. Witnesses for the defence stick to the stories circulated long ago by Goebbels' propaganda machine, according to which Thaelmann was presumed to have died in an allied air raid on August 28, 1944. That lie was exposed anew at the trial: former Buchenwald inmates told the court that they knew of Thaelmann's death before the bombing. The court has sufficient evidence to reconstruct the events. What will the outcome be? We do not have long to wait: the verdict is expected in early May.

Tradition Lives On

Let us return to Thaelmann Square in Hamburg. The museum building also houses the office of the board of the regional Communist Party. It was there that a member of the board's secretariat, Horst Boje, told me about the preparations being made by Hamburg Communists for the celebration of the Thaelmann centenary.

"For us preparations for the jubilee also mean preparations for the congress of the German Communist Party due to take place in our city in early May," Horst Boje said. "The most important task today is the struggle for peace, against American plans to militarize space and F.R.G's participation in them. This is what lends special importance to Thaelmann's political testament: to strengthen the unity of action of the working class and promote cooperation between the Communists and the Social Democrats. We have a strong anti-war movement in our city. The Communist, Social Democratic and Green parties have called upon their members to take part in Easter peace marches. The city parliament has passed a resolution denouncing the F.R.G.'s participation in the American SDI programme."

The congress will sum up the results of the Thaelmann recruitment drive launched by the German Communist Party. The Hamburg Party branch has grown considerably and many new Party groups have been set up. But numerical growth is not the only thing. As new blood is infused into the Party, ideological and educational work has to be upgraded because most new members have a poor grasp of theory and little political experience. The contribution of the Thaelmann Museum to the education of young Communists can hardly be overestimated. It is there that they can learn about the history of the working-class movement both in Germany and abroad and the revolutionary traditions of their city.

On April 16, just as last year, Hamburg Communists will come to Thaelmann Square for a mass rally, this time to commemorate the centenary of the chairman of the Communist Party of Germany and lay a foundation stone of a monument to the heroes of the struggle against nazism.

A. TOLPEGIN
Our Own Correspondent
Hamburg-Bonn

YOU ASK...

Our press has reported on the theft of artifacts from the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City. What were the stolen treasures and is there any hope of recovering them?

A. STARKOV
Kharkov, U.S.S.R.

PILLAGING THE PAST

A structure resembling a baobab tree with a flattened top stands in the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City, where the stolen treasures were kept. It is the pillar supporting the roof, at once the architectonic centre of the building and a fascinating fountain—The Tree of Indian Culture. Now not only the museum, the pride of Mexico, but the whole tree of Mexican history and culture has suffered serious damage.

The vandals stole unique works of art of the Maya, Aztecs, Zapotecs and other peoples of pre-Columbian Mexico. In all, more than 170 exhibits, gold, jade and pyrites miniatures, were stolen. Their market value is immense but culturally and historically they are priceless.

Here is the story of one of those unique items, a mosaic mask from the crypt of the Temple of Inscriptions, the main pyramid of Palenque.

Palenque is the name conventionally given by scholars to the city-state which was the Mayan political and cultural centre from the 3rd to the 8th century A.D. The ruins of the palace and pyramids of the ancient city at the foot of the Tumbala Mountains were discovered by travellers and archaeologists long ago. However, the mysteries of Palenque continued to attract excavators, and in the middle of this century the Mexican professor Alberto Ruz found a treasure which amazed America and the world.

In June 1952, after four years of exhausting toil, the Ruz expedition discovered, 25 metres beneath the Temple of Inscriptions, a spacious crypt containing a monolith covering much of the floor. It took the expedition several more months to examine the crypt. Eventually, they moved the five-ton block aside, and in a sarcophagus under it discovered the remains of a ruler of Palenque, who must have been given a priestly burial at the end of the 7th century. The jewelry of the Mayan king was marvellously preserved; there was a necklace of nine rows of more than a thousand jade beads, bracelets and jade rings. (Incidentally, jade, the sun stone, was valued by the ancient Indians above gold and silver and symbolized well-being and happiness.)

The head of the king was adorned with amazing jewelry and his face was covered with a marvellous mosaic mask put together from more than 200 pieces of jade, with the eyes made of obsidian and shells. The death mask was placed on the face of the king at the time of burial. Now, 1,300 years afterwards, it has again been buried, as it were, in an unknown hiding place.

The robbers clearly knew what they were about. They also carried away a number of precious adornments found in the sacred well at Chichen Itza, perhaps the most famous Mayan city in the north of the Yucatan Peninsula. Ancient Indians dropped them into a deep well when they prayed to their gods for life-giving rain. The treasures, recovered with much effort from the silt-covered bottom, have now again sunk without trace. The same fate befell the unique jewelry of the Mixtecs, gold pendants, adornments in onyx and gold shaped like a jaguar's paws, found in a burial in Monte Albana. There was a political and cultural centre of the Zapotecs and later the Mixtecs near that city in southern Mexico between the 4th century B.C. and the 16th century A.D. The robbers also stole the jade mask of the Zapotec God Murcielago found at that site.

The Murcielago mask is one of the many unique exhibits stolen from the Mexico City museum.

One can only guess at the whereabouts of these and other works of art stolen from the museum. They could already have found their way to a fabulously rich collector obsessed with acquiring new riches. Incidentally, there are very few millionaires with a keen interest in pre-Columbian art. They are known to live in New York, California, Texas and Arizona. One exhibit stolen from the Museum of Anthropology in the 1960s was recovered in New Orleans. It is quite probable that this time too the stolen goods have made their way to the United States.

The plunder of ancient Indian artifacts has long been the plague of Mexico and other Latin American countries. Several large crime syndicates are involved in it. Having huge resources and advanced technology, including helicopters, they send out their teams to barely accessible areas. Robbers sack ancient cities. Painted jars, jade articles and figurines—in short, anything of value—are smuggled into the U.S. and other Western countries. Such "expeditions" wreck achaeological landmarks: the vandals not only pillage but also seriously damage architectural monuments. If a stela is too large, they saw it to pieces with special saws. The fragments are sold to various private collectors, and works of art are thus lost to science and culture.

Though laws have been promulgated in a number of Central American countries, including Mexico, to protect works of ancient art, the problem remains acute. It is very hard to control robbers: they operate over vast areas, whereas only those monuments which are known to science are protected, and not very efficiently at that. Small wonder that priceless monuments of ancient civilizations are acquired by rich private collectors in other countries. The stolen treasures can be recovered only if the fact of theft can be proved with documents. Mexico has more than once taken such evidence to the U.S. authorities and recovered its art treasures. But these were only the tip of the iceberg: many monuments as yet unknown to science must have been plundered.

Archaeologists are doing what they can to salvage the monuments of ancient cultures. They do research and publish articles in popular periodicals, urging collectors to refrain from buying ancient works of art unless their origin and source of procurement are certified. But greedy moneybags, the godfathers of the shameful business of stealing and selling treasures that belong to mankind, turn a deaf ear to these appeals. So vultures continue to defile the temples of art.

Albert PIN

The Diplomatic Academy of the Soviet Foreign Ministry has put out its Diplomatic Yearbook for 1985, the fourth in the series. The book sets out the main lines of diplomacy and foreign policy followed by the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community over the past year. The political, economic and social problems of international relations are also considered along with the activity of a number of international and regional organizations and military-political alliances, and books on politics published abroad are reviewed. Below is an excerpt from the memoirs of Soviet ambassador ALEXEI VORONIN, included in the Yearbook.

SHAH OF IRAN IN RETROSPECT

For almost 40 years my diplomatic activity has been largely associated with the Middle East. I worked as a counsellor in the Soviet embassies in Iran and Turkey, as ambassador in Guinea and Jordan, and in the Middle East department of the Foreign Ministry. In Iran I spent a total of 12 years.

Staff members at the Soviet embassy in Iran led by ambassador Nikolai Pegov (from 1956 to 1963) strove to ensure that relations between the two countries developed successfully on the principle of full equality, respect and mutual advantage.

While committed to a policy of good-neighbourly relations, Soviet diplomacy did not ignore the hypocritical, pro-imperialist character of the policy of Iran's ruling clique consistently pursued by Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, who reigned from 1941 to 1979.

This author met the shah on several occasions. Groomed for the office by his father, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi received a secular European education. Polite in conversation with foreigners, he was despotically rude to his subjects and even members of his own family. Obsessed with the idea of his greatness and his special mission, he could sometimes make a favourable impression on diplomats accredited to Teheran. But he did not enjoy respect among the ordinary people. A wolf-cub always grows into a wolf, Iranians said of him.

I once asked him why the old title "shah-of-shahs" was still used in Iran. Pahlavi replied that it was more than just a concession to tradition. Every Iranian, he said, now considers himself a shah, if only a little shah. And a shah-of-shahs is therefore needed to subject all the other shahs to his will. That is why I am addressed as shah-of-shahs, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi concluded. These remarks expressed his desire for unlimited power and intolerance of any views that did not accord with his own.

The Iranian diplomat Hamid Sayah told me that he and some other venerable Iranian gentlemen once dared advise the shah to relinquish the heavy burden of administering the affairs of state. They cited the example of Britain where governments, which are responsible for everything, come and go, while the king or queen remains. The shah looked sternly at the old men and said this would not happen in Iran. After the audience some high officials fell into disgrace while others, mindful of the incident, refrained from giving similar advice to the shah.

As was evident from his many public statements, the shah understood the importance and benefits of normal relations and economic cooperation with the Soviet Union. In talks with Soviet officials he even said that friendship with the great northern neighbour was an objective of national policy and that as long as he was alive he would never take upon himself commitments that infringed the security interests of the Soviet Union. Mohammed Reza Pahlavi said all this firmly, in the full conviction that his "word as a soldier and a man," as he liked to call himself, would not be violated. But, as they say in Iran, talking about halva won't sweeten your mouth.

Iran concluded many agreements with the United States on "mutual defence," actively participated in the aggressive CENTO bloc, and spent billions of dollars on the purchase of American weapons, tanks and planes. Thousands of American military advisers lorded it in the Iranian army, police and secret services.

The complete dependence of Teheran's foreign policy on the United States was revealed during the Soviet-Iranian talks in January-February 1959. On the initiative and invitation of the Iranian government a Soviet delegation arrived in Teheran to negotiate a new treaty of friendship and non-aggression. The Soviet delegation accepted the Iranian draft treaty, and the talks were on the way to successful completion. But Washington sharply reminded Teheran that on March 5 Iran, Turkey and Pakistan were to sign military agreements with the United States. Negotiations with the Soviet Union were broken off. A farce was staged, with the shah, the premier and other highly-placed dignitaries feigning illness. The Soviet delegation was unexpectedly offered tourist trips to Isfahan and Shiraz.

For all its respect for the historical past of the Iranian people and its culture, the delegation politely declined the invitation. When the trick did not work, the Iranians began to claim that it was Moscow that had proposed negotiating a new treaty, and an attempt was made to shift the blame for a "misunderstanding" to our interpreter, whose marvellous knowledge of Persian had only recently been highly praised. The groundless and unfriendly character of the Iranian government's stand was exposed in a statement by the Soviet delegation.

The experience of Soviet-Iranian relations shows that their development on the principles of good-neighbourliness has always been beneficial to both countries. And, by contrast, a deterioration in these relations has always played into the hands of imperialist circles and aggressively-minded militarists who pursue goals inimical to the security of both the Soviet Union and Iran. Both states stand only to gain from political, economic and commercial relations firmly based on mutually advantageous cooperation.

■

The Italian press has repeatedly carried reports about citizens of the socialist countries being sentenced to prison terms, or otherwise thrust beyond the pale of normal life, as dissidents. Who are these dissidents! If they constitute a minority, why persecute them and give the West grounds for speculation! Why not prove the fallacy of their views in an open debate!

Raffaele COPPOLA
Salerno, Italy

REIN MULLERSON, LL.D., replies:

Your letter brought to mind an interesting episode that occurred some years ago in the Netherlands when I was still attending the Hague Academy of International Law. The local papers were full of reports about "Soviet dissidents" and the "onerous lot" of the citizens of the U.S.S.R. This naturally gave rise to arguments. In the "authoritative" opinion of one of the debaters, members of minority nationalities and, in particular, the Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians were not allowed to leave their republics and travel outside them even within the bounds of the U.S.S.R., without special permission. You can imagine his consternation when he learned that his opponent in the debate on human rights was one of the "oppressed" Estonians.

Regrettably, such distorted opinions about the U.S.S.R. are not a chance occurrence, but the result of deliberate manipulation of people's minds by the bourgeois mass media.

But to return to your question. Who are the "dissidents" whose fate is the object of such concern in the West?

Take the case of Sergei Babich, whom the supposedly "humanitarian" organization Amnesty International, which was set up in the West mainly for anti-Soviet and anti-socialist purposes, has described as a "prisoner of conscience." True enough, he is serving a prison sentence, not for non-conformism but for gangsterism, moreover, with the use of firearms. Amnesty International has also displayed paternal concern for the killer Zatikyan who was involved in the organization of bomb explosions in the Moscow Metro. It has also taken under its wing S. Lysura, who shot a woman dead during an armed robbery in May 1979. Indeed, as often as not the so-called "prisoners of conscience" or "dissidents" in the socialist countries are common criminals to whom, were it not for prompting from abroad, it would not even occur to consider their crimes acts of political struggle.

At times criminal offenders serving sentences do not even know that the Western mass media are championing them as "prisoners of conscience." Yankel Groberman, a resident of Beltsy, Moldavia, sentenced for rowdyism, is a case in point. He was indignant when he learned that Amnesty International had begun a campaign in his defence, considering him as being victimized for his political convictions and wanting to go to Israel. Thus, even people convicted of criminal offences regard such "intercession" on their behalf as an insult.

Needless to say, in the best of societies there are bound to be individuals who consider themselves to be "victims of circumstances," "misunderstood." Some of them fall for the bait offered by Western special services. All the more so since "dissidence" pays. For instance, Iosif Begun, sentenced for anti-Soviet activity, regularly received money from abroad.

Noteworthy in this connection is an article by the Portuguese writer S. Cerqueira published in the journal of the Vienna International Institute for Peace. He recalls how in the years of the Marcelo Caetano dictatorship in Portugal he was sent to prison for his anti-fascist views. He and other anti-fascist fighters were very much in need of support, but the West European capitalist press passed over their cases in silence. On the other hand, the so-called "dissidents" in the socialist countries are constantly in the centre of attention of the Western press, which envelops them in an aureole of martyrdom. Why is this so? The reason is, Cerqueira writes, that these people have no social base or support in the countries they live in.

How, then, could there be any public debate with individuals who have committed criminal offences? Should murder, embezzlement, spying, or treason be allowed to go unpunished just in order to defer to the Western special services and imperialist propaganda?

Violations of the rights of individual citizens do occur also in the Soviet Union. Such instances are reported in our press. But the Communist Party and the Soviet state see to it that officials guilty of infringement of the rights and legitimate interests of citizens are called to account.

CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev recently underscored the importance the Soviet Union attaches to guarantees of human rights. But the problem has to be treated without hypocrisy and speculation, and not used to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries.

It is in place to ask oneself what object the West is pursuing when it makes an issue of human rights. Is the purpose not to spoil interstate relations and to sow enmity towards countries with diametrically opposed social systems? Have you not wondered why the names of individuals described as "prisoners of conscience," "freedom fighters" and the like are endlessly bandied about in Washington and other Western capitals while the United States' "strategic allies" Israel and South Africa, which are seeking to deny entire peoples their right to self-determination, not to speak of civil rights, are treated with such circumspection in the "free press"? The same applies to race discrimination in the United States and Britain and to the mass killings in El Salvador and Chile. How can one take the U.S. leaders' "concern" for human rights in other countries seriously when these rights are trampled right and left in their own country?

If what I have said above has not dispelled your doubts, I should like to give you this advice: take a closer look at materials released by such an authoritative international body as the United Nations Human Rights Committee. The committee recently heard a report by a representative of the Soviet Union and expressed its appreciation of the conscientious fulfilment by the U.S.S.R. of its international obligations as regards defence of human rights and freedoms. This, I believe, speaks for itself. ■

PS POSTSCRIPT

Meaningful Lullaby

What, peace in danger? The threat of war? But such apprehensions are groundless! This was the spirit of a statement issued late last month by Friedhelm Ost, a spokesman for the West German government. He said: "For more than forty years there has been peace in Europe ... there are no signs that peace is in peril ... we have every reason to feel safe..." Why did Herr Ost undertake to put his compatriots' minds at rest? He answered this question himself by attacking those who were preparing for the spring peace marches, and accusing them of "helping to spread the unfounded epidemic of fear." However, neither honey-tongued exhortations nor threats helped West German authorities stem the tide of the growing anti-war movement. Hundreds of thousands took part in the peace marches.

Fruits of Rambomania

Britons are reaping the bitter harvest of the screening of the Rambo serial in their country. In imitation of the ape-like "superman," his fans have taken to using cross-bows. According to Newsweek, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has reported numerous cases of cats, dogs and other animals killed or mutilated with the weapon. Even people have been injured.

Liquor Line-Up

The Commission of the European Communities has issued statistics showing where the EEC countries stand in the drinking league, DPA reports. Wobbling at the top are Luxemburgers (an "average" citizen over fifteen consumed 22 litres of spirits in 1983). Runners-up are Belgians with 16.7 litres, and Frenchmen with 16.6. Not far behind are Italians with 15.8. Meanwhile West Germans drank an average of 13.2 litres or almost twice as much as in 1960. Bringing up the tail are Greeks and Britons, with respectively 8.7 and 8.5 litres.

Sinking Ship

A dispatch in the French newspaper Le Monde notes a "growing desire among the white minority to go away from South Africa." More than a million and a half people — over a third of the white population — want passports issued so that they can leave the country. Pretoria is trying to obstruct this, though there is a still greater obstacle: 74 countries have already officially declared that they will deny admission to South African passport-holders.

Though They've Plenty of Time to Read

First the Good News, the local newspaper in the British town Heanor, has folded because nobody wants to buy it, the Viennese Die Presse reports. For three years it kept afloat thanks to advertisement and specialized in featuring cheerful stories such as how a pair of old-age pensioners got rich by breeding budgies commercially, or a local potter won an order from Japan. But when unemployment among the town's population of 12,000 shot up to 17 per cent, people wouldn't take the paper even for free.

Ménage à Trois

In Rome two society ladies are fighting for their rights as widows of the late Count Luciano Zucchini Solimei, who died in January 1983. Count Solimei married Marisa Barbieri Galanti in church and Elena Ramponi in a registry office. The latter instituted a law suit against the former when she saw a printed notice of the count's death signed "The Grieving Widow." The court of first instance returned the verdict in her favour, but the court of appeals pronounced the lady married in church the legitimate widow. The Italian judiciary has legalized a "ménage à trois," the West German Stuttgarter Zeitung reports.

Records

In a competition in a Munich pub Josef Hoechrl, 33, held a litre tankard of beer with his arm outstretched for 1 hour, 36 minutes and 38 seconds, thus almost doubling the previous "record," the Spanish El Pais reports.

Old Newspapers Problem

A newly promulgated law in Saudi Arabia makes it a crime to dump Arabic-language newspapers in rubbish bins, AP reports. The reason is that they usually carry lines from the Koran or sayings of the prophet Mohammed.

Unversed in the 3 R's

In France today, despite her having produced great men in literature, philosophy and other areas of culture, there are still many who cannot read a job vacancy ad, fill in a form, or understand train timetables or pay rolls. Nearly 15 per cent of the population are illiterate, Le Monde sadly observes.

Drawings by V. Rozantsev

NEW TIMES на английском языке
NEW TIMES is delivered abroad by AEROFLOT АЭРОФЛОТ

АЭРОФЛОТ
Soviet airlines

ATTENTION BUSINESSMEN AND TOURISTS

Aeroflot resumes regular return flights

Moscow—Washington (from April 29)

and

Moscow—New York (from May 4).

The IL-62 intercontinental jet clipper will fly you to Moscow from New York in nine and a half hours, and from Washington in ten hours.

High standards of passenger comfort and personal service in the best traditions of Russian hospitality will guarantee an enjoyable flight.

Fly Aeroflot to Moscow, the capital of the world's first socialist state, the city that people the world over identify with the campaign for a peaceful future for mankind.

The IL-62 leaves New York every Sunday, and Washington every Tuesday.

For details apply to any Aeroflot office or agency.

MOSCOW IS WAITING FOR YOU

ERDENI DZU

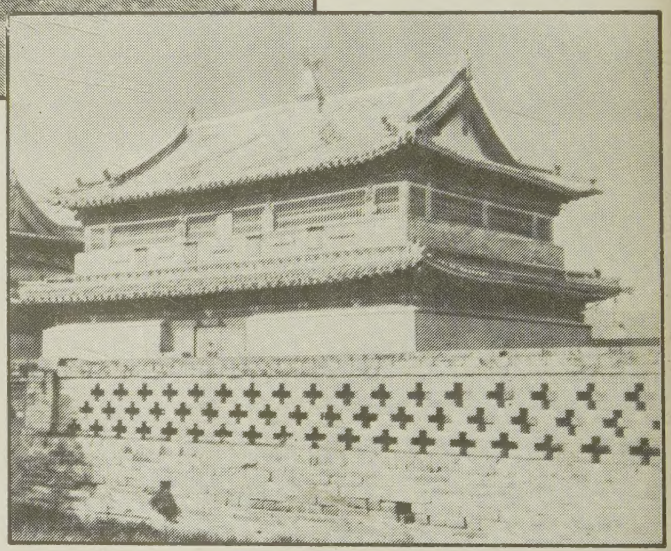
A white brick wall lined with 108 Buddhist memorial shrines, behind it a courtyard and buildings, and over it all a haunting melody played by the never tiring steppe wind on the countless bells hung under the upturned eaves. In the semi-darkness of the inner premises sculptured figures of Buddha and his warrior guards, bright-coloured masks and ritual robes.

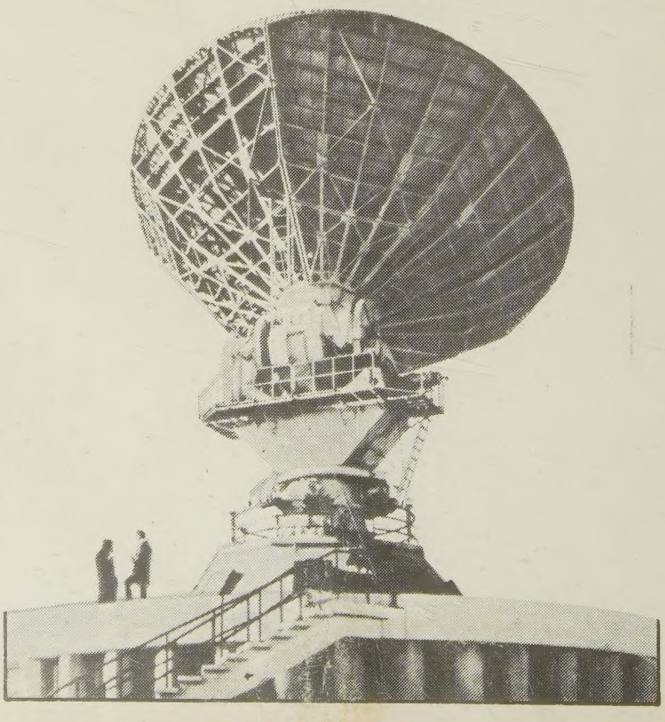
This is Erdeni Dzu, once a Lamaist monastery and now a museum under state protection. It is situated in south-west Mongolia at the site of the country's ancient capital, Karakorum.

Since it became national property, the former monastery has been drawing "pilgrims" of a new kind—people from far and wide eager to acquaint themselves with Mongolia's history and art. Everything here, from the drain pipes in the shape of twisting dragons and the crests on the tiled roofs to the exquisite carvings and embroidered silken scrolls, is the work of the talented architects and craftsmen of the past.

I had occasion also to visit the functioning monastery of Gangdan in Ulan Bator. And recently I met the head of this monastery and President of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace, the Most Venerable Khambo Lama Kh. Gaadan, during his stopover in Moscow on the way back from Vientiane, where he had attended an international conference of Buddhist fighters for peace. "We Buddhists," he said, "cannot remain hermits when the very survival of humanity is at stake."

Yes, peace is indivisible. And we must all do everything possible to preserve it.





In feudal Mongolia Lamaism fettered the creative potential of the people. It was forbidden to till the soil. The male population could look forward only to monkhood. As a result, the nation was doomed to extinction. Which was exactly what the foreign overlords wanted.

The people's revolution saved the country from that fate and placed it on the road of progress. Today good crops are being raised on Mongolia's farm fields, and its mineral wealth is being tapped. A Mongolian has taken part in a space flight, and the Orbita space communication satellite has opened the outside world to Mongolian television audiences. The republic is attaining ever new heights in its advance. At the same time, it cherishes its cultural heritage. Of which Erdeni Dzu is additional evidence.

V. GODYNA

Photos by author